NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE

Brattleboro Union High School

Brattleboro, VT

Nov 17 — Nov 20, 2013

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STATEMENT ON LIMITATIONS

THE DISTRIBUTION, USE, AND SCOPE OF THE
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges considers this visiting committee report of Brattleboro Union High School to be a privileged document submitted by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges to the principal of the school and by the principal to the state department of education. Distribution of the report within the school community is the responsibility of the school principal. The final visiting committee report must be released in its entirety within sixty days (60) of its completion to the superintendent, school board, public library or town office, and the appropriate news media.

The prime concern of the visiting committee has been to assess the quality of the educational program at Brattleboro Union High School in terms of the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Neither the total report nor any of its subsections is to be considered an evaluation of any individual staff member but rather a professional appraisal of the school as it appeared to the visiting committee.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) is the oldest of the six regional accrediting agencies in the United States. Since its inception in 1885, the Association has awarded membership and accreditation to those educational institutions in the six-state New England region who seek voluntary affiliation.

The governing body of the Association is its Board of Trustees which supervises the work of four Commissions: the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE), the Commission on Independent Schools (CIS), the Commission on Public Schools which is comprised of the Committee on Public Secondary Schools (CPSS), the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions (CTCI), and the Commission on Public Elementary and Middle Schools (CPEMS), and the Commission on American and International Schools Abroad (CAISA).

As the responsible agency for matters of the evaluation and accreditation of public secondary school member institutions, CPSS requires visiting committees to assess the degree to which the evaluated schools meet the qualitative Standards for Accreditation of the Committee. Those Standards are:

>   Teaching and Learning Standards
>   >   Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations
>   >   Curriculum
>   >   Instruction
>   >   Assessment of and for Student Learning
>
>   Support of Teaching and Learning Standards
>   >   School Culture and Leadership
>   >   School Resources for Learning
>   >   Community Resources for Learning.

The accreditation program for public schools involves a threefold process: the self-study conducted by the local professional staff, the on-site evaluation conducted by the Committee's visiting committee, and the follow-up program carried out by the school to implement the findings of its own self-study and the valid recommendations of the visiting committee and those identified by the Committee in the Follow-Up process. Continued accreditation requires that the school be reevaluated at least once every ten years and that it show continued progress addressing identified needs.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit - The School Self-Study

A steering committee of the professional staff was appointed to supervise the myriad details inherent in the school's self-study. At Brattleboro Union High School, a committee of faculty members, including the principal, supervised all aspects of the self-study. The steering committee assigned all teachers and administrators in the school to appropriate subcommittees to determine the quality of all programs, activities and facilities available for young people.

The self-study of Brattleboro Union High School extended over a period of 18 months, until the visit in November 2013. In addition to the efforts of the professional staff, the visiting committee was pleased to find that a wide variety of stakeholders from the school community participated in the self-study process.

Public schools evaluated by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools must complete appropriate materials to assess their adherence to the Standards for Accreditation and the quality of their educational offerings in light of the school's mission, learning expectations, and unique student population. In addition to using the Self-Study Guides developed by a representative group of New England educators and approved by the Committee, Brattleboro Union High School also used questionnaires developed by The Research Center at Endicott College to reflect the concepts contained in the Standards for Accreditation. These materials provided discussion items for a comprehensive assessment of the school by the professional staff during the self-study.

It is important that the reader understand that every subcommittee appointed by the steering committee was required to present its report to the entire professional staff for approval. No single report developed in the self-study became part of the official self-study documents until it had been approved by the entire professional staff.

The Process Used by the Visiting Committee

A visiting committee of 16 evaluators was assigned by the Committee on Public Secondary Schools to evaluate Brattleboro Union High School. The Committee members spent four days in Brattleboro Vermont, reviewed the self-study documents which had been prepared for their examination, met with administrators, teachers, other school and system personnel, students and parents, shadowed students, visited classes, and interviewed teachers to determine the degree to which the school meets the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. Since the evaluators represented public schools as central office administrators, classroom teacher, secondary administrators and student support services personnel, diverse points of view were brought to bear on the evaluation of Brattleboro Union High School.

The visiting committee built its professional judgment on evidence collected from the following sources:

- review of the school's self-study materials

- 27 hours shadowing 24 students through classes and activities

- a total of 18 hours of classroom observation (in addition to time shadowing students)

- numerous informal observations in and around the school

- tours of the facility

- individual meetings with 32 teachers about their work, instructional approaches, and the assessment of student learning

- group meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, and teachers

- the examination of student work including a selection of work collected by the school

Each conclusion in the report was agreed to by visiting committee consensus. Sources of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the visiting committee appear in parenthesis in the Standards sections of the report. The seven Standards for Accreditation reports include commendations and recommendations that in the visiting committee's judgment will be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning and to better meet Committee Standards.

This report of the findings of the visiting committee will be forwarded to the Committee on Public Secondary Schools which will make a decision on the accreditation of Brattleboro Union High School.

BRATTLEBORO UNION HIGH SCHOOL
2013 SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE SUMMARY

Brattleboro Union High School (BUHS) is located in Brattleboro, Vermont, in the southeastern corner of the state. One of the largest and most diverse schools in Vermont, BUHS is the only public high school in the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union. Its students come mainly from the five communities in the supervisory union: Brattleboro (population about 12,000) and the four neighboring rural towns: Dummerston, Guilford, Putney and Vernon (each with a population between 2,000 and 3,000). The high school shares the site with the Brattleboro Area Middle School (BAMS) and the Windham Regional Career Center (WRCC). Part of the high school program of the Austine School for the Deaf (Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) is housed at BUHS.

Local industry and business are also diverse, including Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, the Brattleboro Retreat, the very large C & S grocery warehouse, Vermont Yankee nuclear plant, and numerous manufacturing firms and retail establishments. Vermont Yankee recently announced it will be closing by the end of 2014. This will have a large economic impact on the area. As this part of the state is called the southeastern "Gateway to Vermont," tourism is particularly important to the area. There are several institutions of higher learning nearby: Community College of Vermont, Landmark College, Marlboro College, Union Institute and University, the University of Vermont Extension, and World Learning and the School for International Training.

BUHS has an enrollment of 835 students as of fall 2013 in grades 9 through 12. In addition to students who reside in our member towns, BUHS also receives students through school choice, tuition, and WRCC sending schools. Enrollment has been declining slowly since 1999. This decline is consistent with district and state-wide trends. BUHS currently spends $13,625 per pupil annually; the state average is $12,204. Brattleboro's total education tax rate is $1.54 per hundred out of a total tax rate of $2.63. Dummerston's is $1.52 of a total rate of $1.78. Guilford's is $1.68 of a total rate of $2.34. Putney's is $1.59 out of a total rate of $2.16.Vernon's is $0.95 out of a total rate of $1.40

The school's racial/ethnic makeup includes the following: 2 percent Asian students, 2 percent African-American students, 3 percent Hispanic students, less than 1 percent Pacific Islander students, and 5 percent Multiracial students. The following percentages of students in each school in the district are eligible for free or reduced lunch: BUHS and BAMS, 33 percent; Academy, 55 percent; Green Street, 58 percent; Oak Grove, 63 percent; Dummerston, 31 percent; Guilford Central, 54 percent; Putney Central, 45 percent; and Vernon Elementary, 24 percent. Private schools in the area include the following: Hilltop Montessori, the INSPIRE School for Autism, The Neighborhood Schoolhouse, Putney Grammar School, The Putney School, and St. Michael's Catholic School.

The dropout rate was 6.51 percent for 2009-10, 4.6 percent for 2010-11 and 4.94 percent for 2011-12. The graduation rate was 80.5 percent for 2010-2011 .The school attendance rate for fall 2011 was 96 percent. This rate is quite consistent from year to year. The teacher attendance rate is also consistent at 98 percent.

Fifty-one percent of our students attends four-year colleges, 18 percent attends two-year colleges, and 2.7 percent enters the military. These figures reflect only those students reporting back as to their post-graduate plans.

Numerous local educational opportunities are available to students. A representative sample includes the Boys and Girls Club, Brattleboro Music School, In-sight Photography, New England Center for Circus Arts, New England Youth Theatre, and River Gallery School.

School/Business partnerships include work-study in the Community-Based Learning Program, Rotary, the Elks, Intensive Services Lab work-study and various independent study proposals mentored by local organizations.

BUHS partners with local colleges through the Windham Regional Collegiate High School, through which students earn both BUHS credit and college credit. Colleges in this program include the following: Community College of Vermont, Lakes Region Community College, Manchester Community College, New Hampshire Institute of Technology, River Valley Community College of New Hampshire, School for International Training, Union Institute and University, and Vermont Technical College. Often, pre-service teaching interns are placed with us from Antioch University New England, Keene State College, the School for International Training, and Union Institute and University.

Students receive recognition in many ways for their achievements. The BUHS Marching Band was in the 2009 Presidential Inaugural parade. There is Student Art Month; Elks' Student of the Month; Community Arts Night; the annual art department purchase of student art; music honors ensembles; the *Dial* literary magazine; and the school newspaper, *Extempore*. Students are regularly recognized for achievement in academics, athletics, drama, and music, whether on BUHS-TV, in quarterly honor rolls published in the *Brattleboro Reformer*, WTSA Student Athlete of the Month, the annual Poetry Out Loud program, underclassmen awards, and Senior Awards Night.

Brattleboro Union High School Core Values

The students, staff and parents of BUHS share the following core values that define our mission and shape our vision and our community. We seek to create a community whose members demonstrate a commitment to the academic, civic and social expectations of our school.

Responsibility

Individual: All members of this community must be responsible for being a part of a safe, supportive and productive environment. Academic: We seek to foster academic skills and habits that lead to academic and career success.

Social: We seek to foster, develop, and model responsible behavior.

Respect
We value and expect respect among all members of the BUHS community.

Relevance
We value connections among a student's present abilities, experiences, interests, post-graduate plans and that student's education here.

Community
We value an educational experience that goes beyond academics and an environment that fosters positive and productive interpersonal relationships in both BUHS and the wider community.

BUHS Learning Expectations 1/18/12

Learning & Innovation Skills: All Brattleboro Union High School students will develop individual and collaborative learning habits that lead to academic success. Students will...

...use problem solving strategies, critical thinking and creativity in a variety of disciplines.
...view challenges as opportunities for learning. ...be able to work individually and as part of a larger group.

Communication Skills: All Brattleboro Union High School students will take responsibility for effectively communicating ideas and information. Students will...

...use written communication effectively.
...read, interpret and evaluate information from a variety of sources. .
..use oral communication effectively.
..use digital technologies to communicate and receive information.

Personal, Social & Civic Responsibilities: All Brattleboro Union High School students will be productive citizens in the local and global community. Students will...

... demonstrate respectful behavior.
... participate responsibly within the school and community.

COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

TEACHING AND LEARNING
STANDARDS

**CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING
EXPECTATIONS**

CURRICULUM

INSTRUCTION

**ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT
LEARNING**

1 Core Values, Beliefs, and Learning Expectations

Effective schools identify core values and beliefs about learning that function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. Decision-making remains focused on and aligned with these critical commitments. Core values and beliefs manifest themselves in research-based, school-wide 21st century learning expectations. Every component of the school is driven by the core values and beliefs and supports all students' achievement of the school's learning expectations.

1. The school community engages in a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning.

2. The school has challenging and measurable 21st century learning expectations for all students which address academic, social, and civic competencies, and are defined by school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement.

3. The school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations are actively reflected in the culture of the school, drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom, and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.

4. The school regularly reviews and revises its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations based on research, multiple data sources, as well as district and school community priorities.

CONCLUSIONS

Brattleboro Union High School (BUHS) convened a committee of faculty members who engaged in a dynamic and collaborative process informed by current research-based best practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning. During the panel discussion, faculty and administration elaborated on the review process for core values that began with the staff in August 2011. The process of identifying and committing to the BUHS core values and beliefs about learning began in the fall of 2011, through faculty small-group work, resulting in a list of key ideals regarded as essential to the educational process. These small-group faculty lists were compiled and compared to a similar list created by students in advisory groups. The leadership team analyzed both lists and identified the BUHS core values of respect, responsibility, relevance, and community. These core values, as well as the school's civic and social expectations were designed to support implementation of the schools system of research-based positive behavioral interventions and supports. Parents were informed of the process through a bimonthly newsletter. According to the Endicott survey, 77 percent of the parents who responded to the survey was familiar with the core values and beliefs adopted by BUHS. In December 2011, the faculty approved these core values and beliefs. An in-house survey conducted in the fall of 2102 by the NEASC Standard 1 Committee shows that 84 percent of the faculty responding to the small-group survey was satisfied with the final core values and belief document created by the BUHS community. The school board approved the final core values document in May 2012. After approval by the school board, BUHS worked to further ensure a sense of community ownership of BUHS's core values. In the fall of 2012, the Graphic Design students of BUHS created a variety of school logos displaying the BUHS core values. Students, faculty, and parents were able to vote for their favorite design. The outcome of the vote determined the current logo that is used on posters, school letterhead, and other school resources. As a result of the school's collaborative process, 52 percent of the faculty agrees and 32 percent of the faculty strongly agrees that they are satisfied with the core values and beliefs document created by the school community. Parents should be assured a voice in the revision process to ensure they have input and ownership of the core values, beliefs, and 21st learning expectations of their students. Because the BUHS school community continues to engage in a dynamic and collaborative process informed by current research-based practices to identify and commit to its core values and beliefs about learning, many stakeholders are committed to moving forward student achievement of the 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, panel presentation, faculty survey, Endicott survey)

Brattleboro Union High School has a list of learning expectations that identify academic, social, and civic competencies. The learning expectations and their defining rubrics evolved from a process that involved a committee of teachers and administrators, faculty input, and input and additional recommendations from the NEASC liaison and another school in Maine to identify models of effective rubrics. The rubrics include categories for Civic and Social Expectations; Learning and Innovation Skills; Communication Skills: Technology; Communication Skills: Reading; and Communication Skills: Writing. The rubrics identify the following levels of achievement: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, and Beginning. The universal rubrics reflecting the school's core values are used throughout the school; however, their use is not universal, and there is inconsistency in the degree to which the rubrics, and thus the school's learning expectations, are reflected in the curriculum. Fifty-three percent of students and 43.4 percent of staff agree that the learning objectives are challenging and/or measurable, and 27.6 percent of staff concurs that the school has adopted school-wide rubrics that define all 21st century learning expectations. In addition, the Endicott survey results indicate that the learning expectations should be revisited to ensure that all students experience a challenging and rigorous curriculum. Therefore, BUHS has measurable and somewhat challenging learning expectations that address academic, social and civic competencies, however, while the rubrics are

available and there is some degree of their implementation across the curriculum, more consistent implementation across the curriculum will ensure that all students have equitable access to the benefits of a BUHS education. (Endicott survey, student work, self-study, teacher interviews, parents)

The school culture at Brattleboro Union High School reflects the school's identified core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations, however, the core values and learning expectations do not purposefully and consistently drive the school's curriculum, instruction and assessment. Students, faculty, staff, and parents indicated that the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations are evident in the school culture and throughout the school building. BUHS has its core values posted throughout the school, in every classroom, and in the ubiquitous school logo, which was created by students and voted on by the school community. The values are also evident in the recent work done by teachers to revise curricula, using the *UbD* format, to create unit plans, some of which include the core values and learning expectations. The school's core values and learning expectations are also evident in their inclusion in every course syllabus and in the increasing use of school-wide analytic rubrics that identify targeted high levels of achievement. In addition, many teachers also develop rubrics that reflect these values and learning expectations for discrete use with individual assignments. However, there is inconsistency in the degree to which these values, beliefs, and expectations are evident in various academic subject areas. The curricula, instruction, and assessment in most classrooms and subject areas support the core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Comments from teachers, students, and parents, as well as student work samples, also reflect that curricula support and reflect the core values and learning expectations. The school's policies, decisions, and resource allocations support the values, beliefs, and learning expectations. This is evident in the commitment of the entire faculty to implement the civic, social, and personal expectations, the perceived effectiveness of the establishment of the advisory program, the BUHS One Percent Fund, and experiences provided by the allocation of funds to Diversity Day. However, survey results indicate that faculty and students recognize the importance of greater academic challenge. Moreover, while the curricula and culture support the core values and learning expectations, the values and expectations do not drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom. Therefore, greater consistency in purposefully implementing the school's core values and academic learning expectations is necessary to ensure that they drive the school's culture, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (students, teacher interviews, support staff, parents, student work, self-study)

Brattleboro Union High School (BUHS) has adopted a plan to review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations by department and in full staff communities. Research-based best practices and informal feedback about school community priorities currently drive this review process. In the spring of 2012, various departments across the BUHS school community had informal conversations regarding the manner in which students were being assessed through the civic and social expectations (discreet versus holistic). As a result of these conversations, department chairs were given the task to go back to their departments and review the civic and social expectations rubric. The department chairs then brought the feedback from the faculty about the assessment of the civic and social expectations to the Leadership Committee. In fall of 2013, the faculty was informed by the Leadership Committee, as well as through an issue of the *Friday News*, of the revisions made to the civic and social expectations rubric. The faculty members at BUHS are currently implementing the revised civic and social expectations rubric. This is evidenced in students' quarterly grade reports. To some degree, the school examines data about students' achievement on standardized tests and student work as part of the targeted school-wide learning priorities. The structures used to analyze the results of standardized tests and the disaggregated data from multiple sources such as Reading Fluency, AIMS Web, and the NECAP do exist through department meetings, the PBiS Committee, the school improvement coordinator, and the leadership team at BUHS. However, there are limited structures in place that will allow faculty members to examine data about student achievement of the school's 21st

century learning expectations. There have been periodic forums held to share information about 21st century skills and learning with the school board.   However, feedback from parents and the local business community is not yet included in the review and revision process. The core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations do align with the district's learning goals. Although, BUHS regularly reviews and revises its core values and beliefs, a plan needs to be developed and implemented which will more intentionally align the 21st century learning expectations with instructional practices, the written curriculum, and input from the parents and community. (self-study, student grade reports, principal, assistant principal, standard subcommittee)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The school's plan to regularly review and revise its core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations
2. School leaders as well as the Leadership Committee that have utilized best practice to ensure that they are cognizant of the 21st century learning skills
3. The dynamic and collaborative process used to identify and commit to a statement of core values and beliefs
4. The development of challenging and measurable learning expectations
5. The core values and learning expectations that reflect a variety of stakeholder inputs and reflect the values of staff and students
6. The core values that are easy to identify and recall ("Three R's and a C"), and that are present in the culture of the school
7. The posting of BUHS core values throughout the school, in every classroom, and in the ubiquitous school logo, which was created by students and voted on by the school community

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a greater understanding and appreciation of the core values and learning expectations among the faculty and the broader school community (parents and local business community)
2. Develop a dynamic, inclusive, and consistent process to evaluate the data about students' achievement of school-wide learning expectations and the implementation of core values and learning experiences and integrate this into the school's review and revision processes
3. Establish a process to ensure that the core values and learning expectations drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom
4. Continue to revise learning expectations to ensure appropriate academic challenge and to increase parents' and the community's input

2 Curriculum

The written and taught curriculum is designed to result in all students achieving the school's 21st century expectations for student learning. The written curriculum is the framework within which a school aligns and personalizes the school's 21st century learning expectations. The curriculum includes a purposefully designed set of course offerings, co-curricular programs, and other learning opportunities. The curriculum reflects the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The curriculum is collaboratively developed, implemented, reviewed, and revised based on analysis of student performance and current research.

1. The curriculum is purposefully designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve each of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

2. The curriculum is written in a common format that includes:
    - units of study with essential questions, concepts, content, and skills
    - the school's 21st century learning expectations
    - instructional strategies
    - assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic and course-specific rubrics.

3. The curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through:
    - inquiry and problem-solving
    - higher order thinking
    - cross-disciplinary learning
    - authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school
    - informed and ethical use of technology.

4. There is clear alignment between the written and taught curriculum.

5. Effective curricular coordination and vertical articulation exist between and among all academic areas within the school as well as with sending schools in the district.

6. Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

7. The district provides the school's professional staff with sufficient personnel, time, and financial resources for ongoing and collaborative development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum using assessment results and current research.

CONCLUSIONS

The school has identified 21st century learning expectations that teachers generally recognize and support.   School-wide rubrics to assess each of the school's identified 21st century learning expectations do exist. The learning expectations have been created as follows: Civic and Social Expectations, Learning and Innovations Skills, Communication Skills: Writing, Communication Skills: Reading and Communication Skills: Oral Communication.   Efforts are being made to use these expectations in all classes. Although the students are practicing and achieving many of the expectations of the 21st century learning goals, the expectations are not included in the curriculum documents for each department; therefore, widespread uniform adoption has not taken place. At this time, all teachers are required to give students a civic and social expectation grade and this is included on their quarter report. It is intentionally not included on the student's transcript because this domain is still being piloted. Teachers incorporate the other expectations into their teaching to various degrees. Some ask for students to assess themselves; others give the students a grade; some use the student input to influence their grade. The teacher is responsible for the final grade and there is no continuity of application. The expectations are written and used in some classes, but are not yet embedded into curriculum and instruction to ensure that all students have the opportunity to practice and master 21st century skills. When all courses, curriculum documents, and instruction is designed to ensure that all students practice and achieve the school's specific 21st century expectations, teachers and students can look forward to meaningful curricular experiences and to a more purposeful discussion about future curricular decisions. (teachers, standard subcommittee, students, self-study, curriculum guides)

Each department has created a curriculum using a common format using the *Understanding by Design* model. The common format is based on the Vermont Grade Expectations and does include essential questions, concepts, content, and skills, as well as, possible instructional strategies; however, the inclusion of the school's 21st century learning expectations are lacking. The curriculum format includes course-specific assessment; however, the assessment practices that include the use of school-wide analytic rubrics have not been added. Also, the documents are inconsistent in their degree of thoroughness and elaboration. While some of the curriculum documents provide in-depth statements regarding what "students will know" and "what students will be able to do", others provide a mere list. When curriculum is written in a common format by adding the same in-depth clarification, the learning expectations, and the use of school-wide rubrics, students will access common learning opportunities and skills, which will benefit all students as they strive to achieve their learning expectations. (curriculum guides, teachers, self-study)

Some teachers seek to emphasize inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking in some classes, as well as provide authentic learning opportunities, but little evidence suggests that students experience cross-disciplinary learning or practice the informed and ethical use of technology. There is evidence in the written curriculum documents regarding the emphasis of inquiry, problem-solving, higher order thinking, but there is inconsistency in the development and articulation from course to course. Students stated that they feel there are some classes that require more thinking skills than others and that the level of challenge depends on the teacher. With the completion of the curriculum documents, these inconsistencies can be addressed. Some teachers stated that the use of the learning expectation rubrics, which have higher order thinking skills embedded, has altered curriculum and instruction, so with more consistent use of the rubrics, rigorous academic expectations will be utilized. If the curriculum documents require a depth of understanding and an application of knowledge, this will translate to instruction. There are many areas which provide authentic learning opportunities both in and out of school and which address student interests, internships, school trips, and conferences, artist mentoring programs, class fundraising opportunities, and Community Based-Learning course. There is no formal curriculum documentation of cross-disciplinary learning. Currently, the English department has created a Common Core toolkit which has been posted on the BUHS teachers' website.

This toolkit has Common Core rubrics and teacher-created materials that can be used across the curriculum. Currently, there is access to this website, and some teachers from other disciplines are adding materials as well. This creates a shared experience and deliverable curriculum.   With more coordinated planning efforts, cross-disciplinary curriculum would lead to deep and meaningful learning and provide supports for all students. The school's curriculum does not emphasize the informed and ethical use of technology. There are no mandatory courses where these skills are taught. Although no curriculum emphasizes Internet technology or digital literacy, there is an Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources and Internet Policy. Students have frequent and easy access to computer labs throughout the school to study, research, and create documents for submission and/or presentation, but as stated in the school's self-study, there is no protocol regarding the teaching of ethical technology use. With the addition of informed technology practices in the curriculum, all students will have a consistent understand of the purpose and function regarding technological resources and digital information. BUHS's curriculum emphasizes depth of understanding and application of knowledge through inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking in some classes and provides opportunities for authentic learning; and when it develops cross-disciplinary practices and stresses the informed and ethical use of technology, all students will be more effectively able to achieve 21st century learning expectations. (students, teachers, student work, standard subcommittee, self-study)

There is no formal plan to coordinate and monitor the taught curriculum or to ensure alignment between the written and taught curriculum. The curriculum documents contain templates from all departments with essential questions, concepts, content and skills. Some documents contain standards that are explicitly defined and have assessments that measure the skill that is being performed. Other documents lack specificity and do not spell out the assessment process that is being implemented. The curriculum content is shared as teachers team teach and create common assessments, but it is not reviewed and revised on a regular basis by all departments. There are some notable exceptions. The science department has created common assessments for certain lab activities and the social studies department also uses common assessments. The lack of a formal process to ensure that the written curriculum is the taught curriculum does not ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to learn even when such opportunities are included in the curriculum documents, nor does it ensure use of research and better ideas that lead to effective changes and incorporate best practices. Implementing a formal process will help ensure the delivery of curriculum with clearly attainable objectives. (classroom observations, self-study, teachers, curriculum guides, student work)

The curricular coordination between and among academic areas is not formally coordinated in the school or with sending schools in the district. Most of the curriculum development and articulation occurs within departments.   It occurs less frequently between departments and teachers of different disciplines during the year.   Many teachers initiate projects which require areas of coordination. There is yearly creation of an action plan and some teachers take advantage of the One Percent Fund (a fund which allows teachers to apply for funds that show innovation). There are two district curriculum coordinators whose impact on the high school program is limited. Their primary focus is on K through 8. The school district does have a representative district K through 12 curriculum guide to illustrate the coordination and articulation. The manual, which was printed in 2003, is based on the state of Vermont Frameworks.   Not all disciplines are represented. There are examples of vertical alignment conversations that have been established for special education students passing from Brattleboro Area Middle School to BUHS. There are meetings between faculty members from each school and placements are made on the basis of test results, transition meetings and teacher recommendations. Speech pathologists meet on a monthly basis. The math department recently sent teachers to the BAMS, and it sent teachers to the high school to discuss commonalities. The department met more formally several years ago and felt that the meetings were productive. A clear, well-planned developmental, vertically aligned curriculum plan will enable students to pass easily and successfully from one level to

another, from one school to another and from high school into the work world/ college. (standard subcommittee, teachers, self-study, building administrators, school support staff)

Overall, the school provides adequate staffing levels, instructional materials, equipment, and resources for co-curricular programs and student learning opportunities; however, the facilities' technology capabilities present instructional challenges at times. The average class size at BUHS is 16 to 20 students, but there are instances in which classes have fewer than 10 students and some classes with up to 25 students. This average class size supports adequate staffing for the instructional programs. The district has reduced the Title I funding for the high school, and there is a concern about support staffing for those Title I students. There is currently one clinical social worker on staff serving upwards of 50 students a week. The staff feels instructional materials, library/media resources, and the facilities are sufficient; however, in the area of technology, wireless connectivity and working technology are a need. Some teachers feel this is an obstacle to providing learning opportunities around technology integration. There have been discussions regarding one-to-one technology purchasing, but current bandwidth will not support this initiative. A 56 million dollar improvement project on the facility was completed in 2007. This project brought many noteworthy improvements to the school, including well-equipped science labs, music spaces, and environmentally friendly designed areas which feature many varied and interesting displays of student work; students have the opportunity to take a wide variety of diverse offerings as a result of the space created. These improved spaces enable teachers to present curriculum more effectively. As a result of the resources the community provides for the BUHS faculty to deliver the curriculum, students have excellent educational opportunities and a wide variety of course offerings. (students, standard subcommittee, teachers, panel presentation)

The district provides adequate financial resources to support curriculum development. Currently, there are two department meetings a month; one of those meetings is set aside to specifically look at data and curriculum. Time provided for development has been split with other initiatives; now there is time once a month to coordinate curriculum development and to review. To support the process of curriculum development, the district sets aside a One Percent Fund (one percent of the base salaries), which is used to compensate teachers involved in developing curricula, and a wide variety of teachers utilize this opportunity. Teachers during interviews stated departments meet once a month to work on curriculum and to look at data, but no formal coordination exists between disciplines regarding the development and assessment of curriculum. Departments have adopted a common curriculum format using the *Understanding by Design* of which in-service time was provided for professional development using this format. Five years ago, BUHS implemented the John Collins Writing Program to bring a common approach to writing across content areas; however, there has been no evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. Faculty has stated that these documents will need to be revised to incorporate Common Core Standards and that will require dedicated time. Common assessments have been created in some core classes; however, the evaluation of data is inconsistent. Some departments are looking at their data, while others are not, and some departments are seeking out data to analyze. The personnel in place to facilitate curriculum development are two district coordinators: one with a focus on math and science and another with a focus on humanities. The coordinators work primarily with K through 8 and the support provided to the high school is on an "on call" basis. There is a school improvement coordinator whose responsibilities include looking at NECAP and AIMSWEB data. She works with the district coordinators and attends the building's leadership team meetings. One of her primary functions is to triangulate data (standardized tests, transcript grades, and state mandated data), but she does not oversee the development or analysis of curriculum. Once the time is coordinated to complete specific areas of curriculum development, the school will see improvement in student skill and content mastery that will be more easily measured to course objectives and learning expectations. (teachers, self-study, standard subcommittee, school leadership team)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The adoption of a common template for curriculum design
2. The curricular coordination between the cross-discipline teams of special education, English, and math
3. The use of critical thinking, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills in most curricula
4. The commitment and support to sufficient staffing, instructional resources, and facility improvements
5. The creation of a Common Core toolkit that can be accessed by all faculty to help create cross-disciplinary skills
6. The innovative nature of the One Percent Funds for curriculum development
7. The time and resources given to curriculum development
8. The offering of a variety of course options

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Coordinate available time and resources to improve vertical articulation of the curriculum between BUHS and sending schools in the district
2. Complete the process of developing curriculum unit plans
3. Incorporate the school-wide learning expectations into all appropriate school curriculum documents
4. Collect and use data regarding the school's learning expectations for use in making decisions regarding the curriculum
5. Develop and implement processes to ensure the written curriculum is the taught curriculum
6. Develop and implement a plan to ensure informed and ethical practices with technology are included in curricular goals
7. Support more professional development around curriculum development and *Understanding by Design*

3 | Instruction

The quality of instruction is the single most important factor in students' achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. Instruction is responsive to student needs, deliberate in its design and delivery, and grounded in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. Instruction is supported by research in best practices. Teachers are reflective and collaborative about their instructional strategies and collaborative with their colleagues to improve student learning.

1. Teachers' instructional practices are continuously examined to ensure consistency with the school's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations.

2. Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by:
   - personalizing instruction
   - engaging students in cross-disciplinary learning
   - engaging students as active and self-directed learners
   - emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking
   - applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks
   - engaging students in self-assessment and reflection
   - integrating technology.

3. Teachers adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student by:
   - using formative assessment, especially during instructional time
   - strategically differentiating
   - purposefully organizing group learning activities
   - providing additional support and alternative strategies within the regular classroom.

4. Teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by:
   - using student achievement data from a variety of formative and summative assessments
   - examining student work
   - using feedback from a variety of sources, including students, other teachers, supervisors, and parents
   - examining current research
   - engaging in professional discourse focused on instructional practice.

5. Teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content area and in content-specific instructional practices.

CONCLUSIONS

The instructional practices are informally examined to ensure consistency with BUHS's core values, beliefs, and 21st century learning expectations. A highly involved student who was adequately involved with the shaping of the 21st century learning expectations felt that the 21st century learning expectations, core values and beliefs are rarely mentioned in classrooms. Other students reported mixed experiences with the 21st century learning expectations. One student said that when he is doing something wrong, a teacher will point out the civic and personal learning expectations as a method of intervention. In some observations the learning expectations are posted. Civic learning expectations are clearly posted on large posters in all hallways of the high school. The *Understanding by Design* unit planning documents that staff have been developing over the past two years lack reference to the school's learning expectations. However, there seems to be a common language developing with the school's systemic approach to using the school's civic and social expectations to frame conduct-based learning. Furthermore, the link between the core values and beliefs and the 21st century learning expectations and day-to-day instruction is missing. In addition to the student reports, classroom observations inconsistently display essential questions, objectives, or agendas. One art class had essential questions, objectives and an agenda posted for the day's lesson, which connected to the problem-solving learning expectations. A teacher had an essential questions posted, which were not clearly linked to a learning expectation. Another teacher referred to respect (under the personal, social, and civic expectations) when preparing students for class presentations, but did not make the link to the school's academic learning expectations clear. Several other classrooms--math, science, English, photography--had 21st century learning expectations posted, but no tangible link to the day's lesson. It is clear from nearly all work samples collected that the teachers understand the link between their assignments and the learning expectations. What is not evident is whether or not the students are aware of these connections in their education. The modern and classical languages (MLC) department has made deliberate strides to reflect on and respond to the demands of the school's academic learning expectations. Teachers regularly provide content-specific rubrics while some are also providing an academic learning expectations rubric. Additionally, the MCL department began incorporating more technology into their teaching as a result of the learning expectations. While the MCL department had hoped to include more technology, the learning expectations provided the impetus to do so. Most other teachers reported that they do not regularly reflect on the learning expectations or core values and beliefs at least in part because they expect them to change to align with the Common Core State Standards in the near future. BUHS has made valuable strides in developing a series of documents related to curriculum (*Understanding by Design*) and instruction (learning expectations and core values). These documents are effective as guiding documents. The missing component is the relevance of these documents to daily instruction. Teachers attest that these do not impact what they plan and students consent that the documents are not explicitly referenced in instruction. When these documents are used to drive decision-making and instruction, students are likely to find more relevance in their day-to-day experience at BUHS and teachers, too, will likely find more commonality between their content areas. (district administrators, students, curriculum guides, classroom observations, student work)

In some areas teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's learning expectations. Personalizing instruction to students is pervasive and appears in a variety of ways. For example, one math teacher uses exit tickets to determine individual students' levels of understanding. The teacher then differentiates instruction the next day. Students who are falling behind are helped to catch up. Students who demonstrate clear understanding are given extension tasks, like creating problems for the night's homework assignment. Also, a small Fundamentals of Algebra class allows the teacher to provide students with assignments based on their individual needs. In Intermediate French, students are asked to write about their childhood. Level 2 students are expected to form sentences that are more complex, longer and more detailed than what is required from the level 1 students. A social studies teacher offers many ways a student can present information, for example, through songs, skits or essays. While some teachers are able to differentiate instruction based on formative assessments,

implementation is inconsistent across all curricula, therefore the opportunity to achieve the 21st century learning expectations by all students is inequitable.

Opportunities for cross-discipline learning are limited. One math teacher mentioned she was able to pre-teach her students the math skills needed for an upcoming science unit. The teacher commented this came about through an informal conversation in the copy room, rather than during a planned meeting. One English teacher who teaches a course on mythology visits an art class when those students are about to create "hero masks." One student reported that three of her classes are covering race issues. The student felt that this overlap is coincidental. The variety of instructional times may also make cross-discipline learning difficult to plan for. Lack of common collaborative work time also makes planning difficult. International Foods, for example, does not discuss the culture behind the food being prepared. Math and science teachers did meet previously to discuss common language and common math symbols used in both disciplines. Although some informal collaboration exists, no designated time for teachers is planned for these cross-discipline units. BUHS is aware that this area is one of their needs, based on statements made in the self-study. Although teachers indicate a willingness to pursue cross-discipline instruction, opportunities for planning are limited, which has a direct impact on students achieving the 21st century learning expectations.

Many examples of students as active learners across the curricula exist. Pre-calculus students graphed quadratic equations by creating models, identifying vertices and intercepts and by displaying their findings on a poster. Geometry students were given a geometric proof to complete with a partner and then presented their findings to the class. Juniors completed a social studies quarter project that is self-directed. They choose the topic and they must research it within the community through independent research. The teacher checks in periodically, but most of the project is self-directed. An experiment conducted by students in a statistics class had students creating and conducting an experiment testing the effects of different types of music on test scores. More than 71 percent of parents who responded indicates that teachers engage their children as active learners as reported in the Endicott survey. Teachers' instructional practices support the achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations by engaging students as active and self-directed learners.   (teachers, student work, self-study, Endicott survey, students, observations, standard committee)

Brattleboro Union High School emphasizes inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking. In math classes, students regularly engage in problem-solving tasks. In the math department students in pre-calculus are required to convert and rewrite equations into other forms, and to create a visual to represent their inquiry. The Techniques in Problem-Solving (TiPs) course teaches struggling math learners essential strategies to solve problems. Students in geometry incorporate technology through an online tool called "Geometer Sketchpad" to utilize the Lute of Pythagoras. Students are able to problem-solve to come to their own unique designs. In chemistry a teacher designed a chemical reaction lab that made clear the objectives of the assignment that began simply with identifying pairs of substances that react, progressed to providing evidence, and finished with an analysis of all the collected data. Students in an Advanced Placement Literature course take unit tests that range from matching questions to questions that ask students to assess literary criticism of novels from two opposite points of view. Another English course asks students to analyze quotations in depth. BUHS also offers 39 dual enrollment courses. Some of these courses are taught within the walls of the high school and are certified by the college granting credit as college level. While numerous examples of problem-solving, inquiry and higher order thinking exist, these are not clearly connected to learning expectations, essential questions, or the *Understanding by Design (UbD)* unit plans. In order to have a consistent and relevant learning experience, clear links between these activities and the guiding curriculum documents will make access to the learning expectations more equitable.

BUHS students occasionally engage in activities that apply knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. The practical arts classes (including sewing and cooking) give students skills that may affect their lives in the future. Many departments, including modern and classical languages, science, and social studies plan trips to locales as diverse as Germany, Switzerland, Costa Rica, and Northern Ireland, to engage in authentic tasks. The science department has begun a travel abroad program that allows students to use their classroom learning in the study of rainforests and rainforest ecosystems in real-world situations. Students in the music department are given the opportunity to lead their peers in performing compositions. Parents were enthusiastic about a summer course titled "Introduction to High School Studies." This course has a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) focus and includes visits to local businesses and college campuses to engage students in tasks that apply the academic skills they learn in the course. The course prepares students for their freshman year course work. Students reported that the television production classes provide the opportunity for students to conduct an internship for an English credit. Additionally the Windham Regional Career Center is available to students and has applications to their lives. While there are several examples of authentic tasks, they need to become more widely and deliberately available. Furthermore, while the trips abroad are authentic, many students who are from disadvantaged homes may not be able to access them or the 21st century learning expectations.

Use of student self-assessment and reflection is expanding at BUHS. The John Collins Writing Program has been in use in all classes for four years. In English classes the Focus Correction Areas (FCAs) that the John Collins Program uses, act as a rubric by which students assess themselves. One teacher uses rubrics to have students self-assess writing, do a blind peer-assessment, and then assess it as a teacher. This enables students to look critically at their own work but also to calibrate their assessment with their peers and the teacher. In the Television One and Two courses, students were asked to reflect on the public service announcements of their peers in terms of "what worked well" and "what could be improved." In the MCL department teachers are using formative self-assessments to guide their instruction. One such assessment uses a "lightbulb" and a "puzzle piece" to have students identify something from the day's lesson that is an "ah-ha" and "puzzling," respectively. As students are further exposed to the act of self-assessment and reflection, they become more engaged and invested in their own learning. Further and more deliberate facilitation of self-assessment and reflection activities will give students the opportunity to gain confidence and skills that will help them for college and career readiness as related to the communication and personal, social, and civic 21st century learning expectations.

Integrating technology in the classrooms at BUHS has been successful in many places. Two technology coordinators in the building have helped teachers stay current with computer hardware and software. The recent hiring of a technology integration specialist has further increased access to technology. Google Docs is used within the classrooms. Students can access Google via computers from department PC carts. Students can then participate in class discussions by making comments within the document. Teachers can also edit work and give feedback without having to mark up student work. This allows teachers to give more feedback within the class period. The computer program, Assistments, is used to monitor progress and helps math teachers collect data quickly and easily. Several teachers use technology that allows students to investigate mathematical concepts. However, issues do exist in the use of technology. Bandwidth is an issue, for example. It makes for slow or non-connective Internet. Many teachers have embraced the use of technology in the classroom, however, connectivity and general technological issues have impeded their progress. Until connectivity and tech issues are resolved, students will continue to have difficulty meeting the 21st century technology learning expectations. Inquiry and problem-solving approaches to instruction are apparent throughout the school. As teachers continue to work together expand their skills in teaching for understanding, the opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking activities will continue to grow in

classrooms. (students, teachers, classroom observations, curriculum guides, student work, standard committee)

Teachers inconsistently adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of each student. Teachers at BUHS frequently employ formative assessment, however the results vary. A teacher of AP Calculus gauges the success of students on homework practice problems at the beginning of class to adjust the number and difficulty of problems students work with in class that day. Several departments are beginning to implement computerized tests on Google Drive. The math department is in the beginning stages of using Assistments, an online tool, to implement common formative assessments. The lack of common planning time, however, inhibits teachers from collaborating on problems and successes in common courses. One observed class featured no formative assessment of individual students during an 88-minute block. A heterogeneous social studies course featured a differentiated attempt at formative assessment by offering four methods--drawing, collage, cartoon, comic strip--to summarize the tenets of Karl Marx's "Communist Manifesto." The informal initiative of many teachers to create common formative assessments is admirable, but a more deliberate attempt to formatively assess and respond to student learning and needs will give students greater access to the 21st century learning expectations and the curriculum.

The success of strategic differentiation is limited. The faculty at BUHS reported that students on 504 plans and IEPs receive differentiated instruction based on those plans. In one math class a teacher uses formative assessments to break students into two groups the next day: a group that has mastered the current concept and is ready to move on, and a second that continues to need practice on that concept. The English department has had training from Antioch University of New England. One English teacher gives choices on tests so students can choose a question with which they will have the most success. Students reported that when studying the Spanish-American war in a social studies class that they are given choices of what topic to research. Other students referred to "blanket assignments" that do not vary for students. As student reported that if a student approaches a teacher with an alternative, most teachers are accommodating. Other attempts at differentiation are seen in physical education and health courses, which emphasize individual effort. Some differentiation occurs after an assignment is given. Parents reported that students are frequently allowed to retake assessments on which they have done poorly. Parents and teachers alike laud the success of the ACE program, an intervention block which allows teachers to call students back for individualized instruction. Most teachers do not strategically implement differentiation. Teachers reported that differentiation is done on a student-by-student basis and as a reaction to student adversity and is extended to all students whether or not they receive 504 and IEP accommodations. Attempts are being made to differentiate instruction for students identified by 504 plans and IEPs, and extending this practice to the entire student body will improve access 21st century learning expectations.

While the vast majority of teachers use group activities in their instruction, the purposeful organization of these activities is sporadic. In the choral class the teacher breaks her 100 students into four groups to choose a pop song that the group will collaboratively work on to create an acapella arrangement. The teacher deliberately chooses two students from each of these groups to lead the discussion and arrangement of the pieces. Students report that most of the group projects in their classrooms involve self-selected groups until they do something wrong. Students in the AP Calculus course are grouped randomly into groups of four or five. This grouping is changed on a weekly basis to provide students with different collaborative groups. Students in this class reported that they appreciated this organization because there is always at least one student in the group who can help them overcome challenges. While there are some effective uses of purposeful organization in group activities, the

opportunities provided through heterogeneous classes are not maximized throughout the building. Increased attention to varied groupings will enhance student ability to master personal, social, and civic learning expectations.

The use of additional support and alternative strategies within the classroom is infrequent. One teacher admitted preferring to keep students in whole-class instruction to give them a common experience. When asked about additional support when activities are difficult, students reported that they go to the Planning Room rather than the classroom teacher. Many of the 9th grade English and math courses are co-taught between the content teacher and a special educator. One English teacher reported that in these classes they split the class into two groups with the special educator taking one group and the classroom teacher taking the other. Students reported that teachers are always available for extra feedback. Students indicated that they utilize the ACE intervention block to solicit more specific feedback. Students also indicated that most feedback comes after an assignment is due at which time most teachers allowed students to redo an assignment for "correction credit." Most teachers are giving students additional support to succeed at the course work. Student challenges will be mitigated when they are given opportunities for additional support and alternative strategies *during* a class period. However, more students will have more opportunity to meet the 21st century learning expectations with a proactive approach to student learning. (teachers, students, district administrators, self-study, panel presentation, classroom observations, student shadowing, student work, parents, standard committee)

While teachers at BUHS have several opportunities to meet with others, in large or small groups, to improve their instructional practice, there is discrepancy between how different departments use this time. In an interview with teachers, teachers reported that they meet one Tuesday a month for the express purpose of analyzing data. Individual teachers do not seem to support that claim. The music department has a K through 12 meeting five times a year in which they build common language into the curriculum and gather student data through a common standardized assessment. No changes have been made based on the data. Additionally, within a department there is a discrepancy between how teachers interpret scores using the 21st century learning expectations rubrics. Informal meetings within departments have been beneficial in using formative and summative assessment data to improve instruction. All departments will benefit from dedicating formal time to tackle this task in order to improve instructional practices.

Some teachers reported they meet within content areas to look at and discuss student work, but this does not seem to be happening systemically. A special education teacher reported that her department looks at samples of two column notes from students in order to improve their note taking skills. The social studies department compares answers to common assessment items in order to improve instruction. A science teacher reported that she uses data from assessments to help plan for her ACE period. She also uses student work in order to effectively group students during activities. For example, she makes sure each group has a strong math student who can assist the others who may need assistance. An example of student work from a social studies teacher shows a quiz activity in which students keep track of their progress. Students answer as many questions as possible without help, then use their notes for the remainder of the quiz. Students then track their scores on a graph. Another example of student work is a mid-chapter test given to a Math 9 class. The teacher explained that the results of this assessment determines which concepts/skills need to be revisited. This particular data point was not addressed in the self-study. Individual teachers are making progress to

improve instruction by looking at student work, but formal time to discuss within and and across content areas will further improve instructional practices.

BUHS teachers use feedback to improve instructional practices, but the variety of sources seems to be limited. Teachers reported that there is limited time available to give feedback to members within their department. While the self-study states that teachers contact parents often through conferences or other means, feedback is not used for improving instructional practices. It is used more often on a student-by-student basis. Multiple teachers reported they obtain data about instructional strategies through surveys given to students during class. Feedback is offered from supervisors during formal observation and evaluation, but not regularly during informal observations. While student feedback is important to consider in terms of instruction, more variety is needed in order to maximize improvement in their instructional practices.

In some departments teachers are examining current research to improve instructional practices. The English department, for example, has eliminated the lowest level of grouping and has put in place a co-teaching model to help meet the needs of all students. Co-teachers attended in service training over the course of a year that helped ease the transition. Several departments subscribe to content-specific journals and the principal sends out a weekly update which often includes a piece of current research for the faculty to consider. The English department self-selected to get training in differentiated instruction from Antioch University, but other departments lack training in this current research. The English department also received training in *Understanding by Design* for the purposes of creating curricular documents, but other departments report that they are self-trained in how to use the guiding template of *Understanding by Design*. Some teachers report that the John Collins Writing format conflicts with the 21st century learning expectations' writing rubric, while others report the rubrics are closely aligned. There are some systemic research-based practices employed in other areas. The math department has taken steps to building common formative assessments to help make adjustments to practice. The science department has developed a vertical approach to teaching lab report skills. Teachers need greater support and supervision in implementing the initiatives that are based on the current research. Research is shaping instruction in individual departments, but there is inconsistency across departments to examine research and best practices in all content areas. As a result of the differences in teacher experiences and unclear expectations from leadership, all staff members do not have a full level of commitment from to these initiatives that are related to the school's learning expectations.

Faculty and department meetings often find teachers discussing current research in teaching and technology, but formal, regularly scheduled time is not in place to engage in these discussions. A group of teachers regularly attend PBiS trainings, then report out to teachers during department and faculty meetings. Individual faculty members have lead workshops highlighting an area of expertise. For example, the photography teacher presented a workshop on photography to the faculty and an English teacher made a presentation on using iPads in the classroom. The leadership team meets every Thursday during block 2. The team read the book *Driven By Data* together, yet did not discuss the outcome of their research with the faculty. A Common Core toolkit has been created by English department members, using One Percent Funds, to assist teachers in preparing students for proficiency in the Common Core Standards. School leaders have not communicated with faculty how research-based initiatives play a role in improving student achievement. Teachers have indicated that they would like more time to share best practices. While teachers informally engage in professional discourse focused on instructional practice, leaders have not effectively communicated how the research should improve their instruction. Although it is evident that teachers, individually and collaboratively, improve their instructional practices by examining student work, considering feedback and discussing current research and practices with their collegues, when these practices become more

systemic and scheduled, teachers will be more effectively able to assist students as they strive to achieve their academic goals. (teachers, school leadership team, standard subcommittee, teachers, self-study, standard subcommittee, district leadership team)

Most teachers, as adult learners and reflective practitioners, maintain expertise in their content areas and in content-specific practices. Due to the lack of formal collaborative time, most teachers do not have the opportunity to have reflective conversations about instruction with their colleagues. Many teachers report that one of the most significant opportunities for feedback come from parent conferences. Based on walkthroughs, the school administration sends emails to staff that details "patterns of practice" that are not specific to individual teachers, but give teachers an opportunity to reflect on their instruction. Special educators reported frequent informal visits from the special education director that resulted in directed feedback in email form. Classroom teachers reported similar emails from the BUHS principal and assistant principals, but this informal feedback came less consistently and did not seem to inspire much reflection. One art teacher detailed an exam that included a narrative essay in which students get the opportunity to judge the course assessments that were effective and those that were not. The teacher had made significant changes to his curriculum and instruction as a result of these reflective essays. Most of the evidence provided by teachers for this strand showed the majority of professional development comes from workshops, coursework either taught or taken, and trips taken by the MCL department. Teachers have some say in the course of their professional development, as the district sets aside a fund that teachers may submit proposals to access professional development opportunities. Evidence did not support teachers to be reflective after they participated in professional development. In order for professional development to have the greatest impact on instruction and learning, reflection and making connections to the learning expectations is essential and will ultimately increase the students' opportunities to achieve these expectations. (standard subcommittee, teachers, professional development calendar, school committee)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The MCL department for using learning expectations to drive instruction
2. The impact of curriculum design through *Understanding by Design* on instructional practice
3. The teachers who are effectively differentiating instruction within their classrooms
4. The initiative of some teachers to create interdisciplinary learning opportunuties
5. The students who are engaged as active and self-directed learners in many classes
6. The instruction that includes an emphasis on inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking in many classes
7. The authentic learning such as trips abroad and the television production that exists at BUHS
8. The staff's commitment to a common approach to writing instruction
9. The technology that has been successfully integrated in nearly all classrooms
10. The many departments that meet to discuss current research
11. The teachers who are adult learners, reflective practitioners, and maintain expertise in their content areas

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Examine the adoption of a common language of instruction in terms of what is expected in classrooms and how to effectively engage students in 21st century learning expectations
2. Connect instruction explicitly to 21st century learning expectation.
3. Strengthen the practice of personalized and differentiated instruction in all classrooms
4. Commit and provide time to facilitate cross-disciplinary instruction
5. Expand authentic learning opportunities to all students
6. Facilitate deliberate opportunities for all students to self-assess and reflect on their learning
7. Improve the use and access to technology
8. Ensure formative assessments are used by teachers to inform their instructional practices
9. Organize group activities purposefully to maximize to student learning
10. Implement a variety of support strategies within the classroom
11. Provide formal structure for faculty to meet, share and discuss student work, research, and instructional practices
12. Ensure critical thinking, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills are included in all curricula and all levels

4 Assessment of and for Student Learning

Assessment informs students and stakeholders of progress and growth toward meeting the school's 21st century learning expectations. Assessment results are shared and discussed on a regular basis to improve student learning. Assessment results inform teachers about student achievement in order to adjust curriculum and instruction.

1. The professional staff continuously employs a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess whole-school and individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

2. The school's professional staff communicates:
   - individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families
   - the school's progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community.

3. Professional staff collects, disaggregates, and analyzes data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement.

4. Prior to each unit of study, teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed.

5. Prior to summative assessments, teachers provide students with the corresponding rubrics.

6. In each unit of study, teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including formative and summative assessments.

7. Teachers collaborate regularly in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments.

8. Teachers provide specific, timely, and corrective feedback to ensure students revise and improve their work.

9. Teachers regularly use formative assessment to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning.

10. Teachers and administrators, individually and collaboratively, examine a range of evidence of student learning for the purpose of revising curriculum and improving instructional practice, including all of the following:
    - student work
    - common course and common grade-level assessments
    - individual and school-wide progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations
    - standardized assessments
    - data from sending schools, receiving schools, and post-secondary institutions
    - survey data from current students and alumni.

11. Grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning.

CONCLUSIONS

Some of the professional staff employ a process of data collection, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. While Brattleboro Union High School (BUHS) has implemented a method for assessing students on their progress in achieving 21st century learning expectations, the implementation is relatively new to the professional staff. Thirty-four percent of professional staff agrees that they understand the formal process in assessing school and individual student progress in achieving learning expectations, but only fifteen percent agrees that they use the analytic rubrics for assessing student work. Students reported that rubrics are used sporadically in various classes to assess 21st century learning expectations, noting further that rubrics may be attached to assignments when they are given out. It was not clear to some students the reason for implementing the 21st century expectations, although some did recognize the relevancy to real life skills. Students and teachers acknowledged that rubrics are consistently used in the Collins Writing Program. Whereas some content areas are more consistent in using the 21st century expectations than others, the vast majority of teachers are familiar with the rubrics developed to support 21st century learning. There is evidence that most teachers have the expectations posted in their classrooms, and sometimes interact with them in introducing an assignment. Because implementation is recent, analysis of the rubrics and alignment of grade reporting practices and whole-school assessment have not taken place. As indicated in the panel presentation, a focus area of the expectations falls in the personal, social and civic responsibilities. All BUHS students are expected to become productive citizens in the local and global community by demonstrating respectful behavior and by participating responsibly within the school and community. This enables students to gain a consistent set of expectations from staff about civic responsibility, social interactions and appropriate conduct in a learning environment. However, assessment regarding academic and communication skill sets relevant to 21st century learning outcomes is used far less. Consistent use of the school-wide rubrics will ensure that every student will be regularly assessed for the learning expectations, and the school can then assess individual as well as whole-school progress in advancing these expectations. (teachers, students, Endicott survey, panel presentation)

Some of the school's professional staff at BUHS communicates individual student progress in achieving a limited number of the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families, but does not yet report the school's progress to the school community. BUHS developed six school-wide rubrics based on 21st century learning expectations in 2011, and implemented them at the start of the 2012 school year. The six rubrics clearly outline criteria in developing communication skills in writing, reading, oral, and technology, as well as for learning and innovation and personal, social and civic responsibilities outcomes connected to 21st century learning. Assessment is based on a four-point scale. Many teachers acknowledge an emerging familiarity with the expectations and rubrics, and frequently communicate them to their students. A majority of teachers communicate the learning expectations through syllabi or use them in a limited sense in conjunction with a specific assignment. Teachers are not expected to utilize the rubrics in a consistent manner in all areas identified as 21st century learning. The professional staff is expected to complete the personal, social and civic responsibility rubric and report it once time per grading period for all students. This expectation is considered to be primary in all departments. Some of the school's professional staff at BUHS communicates the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families on the other expectations. A schedule of department assignments for using and reporting on 21st century expectations was developed by administration. Documentation of this is included in the 2013-2014 student handbook. Expectations assigned as non-primary are reported once per grading period. The personal, civic and social expectation is the only 21st century learning expectation that all teachers in all departments are expected to report on one time in each grading period. The school uses PowerSchool to communicate student progress to parents and students. These reports include individual progress in academic areas

but do not specifically address all of the 21st century learning expectations. In the 2013 school year, progress reporting expanded to include the assessment of one of the six rubrics; personal, civic and social expectations as measured by different teachers and departments. The district has clearly adopted the expanded use of school-wide rubrics to encompass all of the 21st century learning expectations, and when it consistently reports students' progress on all learning expectations to students and their families and communicates the school's progress to the school community, it will support a stronger effort to develop students' career and college readiness. (panel presentation, teachers, students, student handbook)

Across the school professional staff sporadically collect, disaggregate, and analyze a limited set of data in order to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement. Learning expectations are new to BUHS, so analysis of assessment results from the school-wide rurics and alignment of grade reporting practices have not yet evolved school-wide. Teachers report that they perform data analysis both individually and collaboratively. Departments disaggregate the NECAP scores, but no formal process is in place to analyze student data. The departments meet informally to review data, and there is limited collaboration among departments. However, collaboration takes place occasionally rather than as a scheduled process using a recognized practice. While fifty-nine percent of teachers agrees that they do collect, disaggregate, and analyze data to identify and respond to inequities in student achievement, collectively they report that the school does not provide enough dedicated time for them to collaborate on analyzing student academic achievement. An art teacher reported that many in her department will meet during informal times, such as lunch, and use the time to regularly discuss instruction and assessment data. Both the math and English departments reported that they meet monthly to review NECAP data that informs their instruction. However, the vast majority of teachers agree that they rarely have time to discuss the collection and use of data. Teachers report that giving students consistent feedback on formatives and summative assessments is a strength of BUHS. They recognized in their self-study that while formatives are used, formal evidence of the usage is hard to find. Most of the evidence was reported to be anecdotal with little supporting evidence. In some areas there is a deliberate process of the use of formatives to identify achievement imbalances. There is little formal evidence of their influence on instruction and student learning. Teachers report they are in the midst of data-driven change and have the pieces for it, but that those pieces have not yet been strung together. The adoption of a protocol that affords the professional staff the opportunity to meet to disaggregate and analyze data as well as to review student work will offer BUHS the opportunity to string together the pieces of data-driven change, and will give students the opportunity to have all their strengths and weaknesses indentified. (teachers, Endicott survey, self-study, district administrators, principal)

Prior to each unit of study, some teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed. Many teachers including science, modern and classical languages (MCL) and fine arts teachers explain to their students what will be assessed prior to each unit of study. They inform their students through a variety of means, such as using a class syllabus at the beginning of the year to highlight the 21st century learning expectations, posting the expectations in classrooms for visual reference, and reviewing the 21st century learning rubric that will be used to grade an assignment. Although some teachers communicate to students the school's applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to be assessed, expectations are not communicated with consistency across all content areas. Consistent communication to students of the applicable school-wide expectations across all content areas will advance student learning. (teachers, student work, self-study)

Based on teacher and student interviews and examples of student work, some teachers provide students with both course-specific rubrics and school-wide analytic rubrics that measure the 21st century learning expectations before summative assessments such as projects, essays, Collins Writing Program assignments, and lab reports. Endicott survey data corroborates that over 74 percent of students believes that their teachers give them rubrics in advance of summative assessments and that they understand these rubrics. All departments use rubrics to assess student learning, however this practice varies from teacher to teacher. Some teachers use course-specific rubrics that reference analytic school-wide rubric criteria. In some cases departments have committed to using common assessments. The science department has developed common summative assessments that assess concepts, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Furthermore, they use a common lab rubric that is benchmarked to the 21st century learning expectations with a detailed lab report exemplar. When students are evaluated with a rubric for a summative assessment, they have a clear understanding of their performance. A uniform consistency of providing clear rubrics prior to summative assessments will result in equitable opportunities for all students across the curriculum. (teachers, student work, self-study, school leadership team)

Teachers in many areas understand and utilize a variety of summative and formative assessments at BUHS. Nearly 86 percent of teachers state that they evaluate their students using a variety and range of assessment tools. Assessment was observed to take place in a variety of ways: through observation, visual representation, journal writing, exemplars, research papers and essays, conversations with students both individually or in small groups, pre-tests, projects, and constructed responses. Often either discrete or 21st century learning expectations rubrics were attached. The John Collins Writing Program was also seen as a re-occurring evaluative tool, although one student suggested that it was used more prior to entering high school than since. Students interviewed confirmed a variety of assessment strategies as well as having some knowledge of how they were being assessed. According to the self-study, teachers often utilize a variety of both formative and summative assessments. Based on survey evidence gathered across all departments, teachers use an average of between five and seven different types of formative assessments per week in each class including asking and answering questions, quizzes, homework assignments, class discussion, exit tickets, simulations, student presentations, visual representations, and projects are used as assessments in a range of classrooms. Summative assessments used at BUHS include unit tests, midterms, final exams, projects, performances, and presentations. BUHS provides an extended advisory program during which students are given the opportunity to meet with teachers. This program is referred to as ACE. Parents reported that staff members are frequently available to their students after hours to retake tests to improve grade reports. The capacity of the professional staff at BUHS to use these assessment techniques and to gather information is strong. However, it is unclear how the information is used to adjust curriculum, instruction or assessment. There does not appear to be any formal system in place for the faculty to identify and implement best practices for formative assessment within departments or across the school. There is little evidence to show how formative assessments are used systematically to alter instruction to ensure improved student learning. In addition, there was a level of uncertainty around the use of 21st century learning expectations as they related to assessment with both staff and students. When asked, many students and some staff did not have a clear understanding of this terminology, although the use of 21st century learning rubrics was evident. The continued and consistent adoption of formative assessments into the culture of every class ensures that needed adjustments and reinforcements to instruction can take place immediately at the individual level so that students are learning during every assignment or class period. Implementing a formal system for the faculty to identify and implement best practices for formative assessment within departments or across the school will also serve to ensure an increased level of learning for all students. (Endicott survey, self-study, students, panel presentation, student shadowing, student work)

At BUHS, teachers occasionally collaborate in formal ways on the creation, analysis, and revision of formative and summative assessments, including common assessments. When collaboration takes place, it is generally within departments, chiefly among teachers who teach the same classes. This kind of collaboration can be of use, even though the structure for such discussions is typically informal. Teachers in some departments make their own arrangements informally to collaborate on student assessment. On occasion teachers from different departments have a conversation that evolves into something which can be used as an assessment tool from department to department. According to the self-study, many departments include a common set of questions or prompts on final exams for grades/course levels, which requires a more consciously formal discussion, usually through department meetings or committee work. Cross-discipline collaboration is rare, according to teacher reporting. BUHS has adopted 21st century learning expectations with accompanying rubrics school-wide that could promote opportunities for more broad-based collaboration around assessment, and when a formal practice is in place to support this and when teachers have a process for sharing assessment data among departments students will have common and equitable learning experiences. (Endicott survey, teachers, self-study)

Some teachers across disciplines use formative assessment strategies to provide students with opportunities to revise their work. In Endicott survey results, 64.2 percent of students agrees that teachers assess/correct schoolwork in a reasonable amount of time. Survey results also indicated that a majority of students agree that teachers offer suggestions to help them improve their work. The self-study report, examples of student work, and class observations verify that many teachers provide quick and informative feedback. Some teachers use formative assessment and allow students to revise literature and history research papers. MCL teachers use formative assessment of student oral and written communication. Math teachers use the Assistments computer assessment program to evaluate student mastery of concepts and to determine what concepts and skills need re-teaching. The expansion of consistent, timely, and corrective feedback will allow students to achieve greater academic success while increasing confidence in their abilities. (Endicott survey, teachers, classroom observations, students)

It is less clear to what extent teachers across the school use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning. Math teachers use the daily problem to check student understanding as well as use varied questioning techniques to assess student understanding and to adjust presentation and explanation of concepts based on this informal assessment. The math department has used progress-monitoring assessments and also uses the Assistments program for formative assessments. The English department has used progress monitoring data analysis to modify its curriculum. In other classes teachers circulate as students work independently and in small groups at self-paced assignments answering questions and checking for student understanding. MCL teachers have developed common formative and summative assessments in reading, writing, and oral communication. The art teachers meet during a common lunchtime to consult on the assessment of student work. In most classrooms students were observed being actively engaged in learning most of the time. Emphasizing the use of formative assessment in all classes as a tool for instruction modification will increase student achievement and engagement. (Endicott survey, teachers, self-study, classroom observations)

Some departments at BUHS examine a range of evidence of student learning, however there is no established school-wide protocol that gives teachers the opportunity to inform and revise curriculum and advance instructional practice. The school is its first full year of using the rubrics to evaluate student performance of the 21st century learning expectations. Some individual teachers use both formative and summative assessments and revise instructional practice based on a review of these

assessments. On the Endicott survey, 76 percent of current students think that their teachers use a variety of methods to assess their learning. Most departments acknowledge that more formal collaboration needs to be done analyzing student work and common course assessments to improve student learning, and have made initial steps in this direction. The administration and math, English, and science departments review NECAP release item data annually and conduct item analysis. This analysis has been used to make changes to instruction in English and math. BUHS uses NECAP, AIMS, reading fluency tests, and other data from sending schools to assess 9th graders to determine appropriate academic supports. BUHS has a freshman orientation that includes visits of high school counselors to sending schools and visits of eighth graders to the high school. Math and English departments have used progress-monitoring data to make curriculum modifications. The math department meets monthly to review progress-monitoring results. Math, English, science, and most recently social studies have common course assessments. These vary from common summative assessments to shared questions on final exams. The English, math, and science departments review NECAP data annually to evaluate the need for curriculum changes. The math department has made changes to the 9th and 10th grade curriculum based on this analysis. Art teachers use common rubrics to evaluate student work and meet regularly to calibrate their use of these rubrics. A majority of teachers report that most collaboration on curriculum revision and sharing instructional practices is informal, occurring on a time-available basis. Establishing a school-wide expectation for a systematic examination of a range of evidence on student learning will allow teachers and departments to make adjustments as needed to ensure that all students are mastering the skills and content necessary to successfully move to the next level of mastery. (self-study, Endicott survey, teachers, building administrators)

The school's current grading system does not explicitly report on progress toward the standards with the exception of the personal, social, and civic responsibilities learning expectations. Forty-three percent of teachers feels that school-wide grading and reporting practices are regularly reviewed and revised. There is not consistency in grading practices across curricular areas. The reported progress on the personal, social, and civic responsibilities 21st learning expectation is separate from the students' academic grades in classes. It is not clear now how student progress will be reported for learning and innovation skills learning expectations or the communication skills learning expectations. Some faculty members are unsure of expectations about how rubrics should be used. Some teachers use these rubrics, but a process for regular review and revision of alignment with the school's core values and beliefs about learning is not in place. The frequency of use of rubrics to assess the learning expectations varies by teacher and department. Some departments, such as science, math, English, art, social studies, and MCL, have developed some common assessments that are evaluated using the school-wide rubrics. Other departments review these practices informally and leave review to the individual teacher. There has been no school-wide review of grading practices since the implementation of the 21st century learning expectations.

One example of a quick review of grading practices is BUHS's change from using the new school-wide rubrics for learning expectations as measures of discrete assignments to a holistic evaluation of student progress for a quarter. This change, however, does not appear to be due to a review of beliefs about learning. The school also quickly moved to include reporting of student progress on meeting the 21st century learning expectations for personal, social, and civic responsibilities by adding both individual teacher assessment and averaged assessments of all teachers to the PowerSchool computer program. Reporting on the academic expectations will be addressed in the future.   A method for school-wide review of grading and reporting practices needs as to be established as the school continues to implement these new expectations. Regular review of grading and reporting practices in light of the learning expectations will help ensure that student progress is being evaluated and reported

consistently and equitably across the school. (self-study, teachers, district administrators, standard committee, student work)

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COMMENDATIONS

1. The school-wide implementation of 21st learning expectations in the area of personal, social and civic responsibility
2. The use of rubrics to inform students of evaluation criteria
3. The variety of formative assessments used
4. The quality and timeliness of corrective feedback to students
5. The development of common assessments in some content areas
6. The use of Assistments by the math department as a formative assessment tool

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement a formal process, based on school-wide rubrics, to assess individual student progress in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations consistently across the curriculum.
2. Implement the school's plan to communicate individual student progress in achieving all of the school's 21st century learning expectations to students and their families
3. Develop and implement a plan to communicate the school's progress in achieving all of the school's 21st century learning expectations to the school community
4. Ensure prior to each unit of study that teachers communicate to students the applicable 21st century learning expectations and related unit-specific learning goals to students
5. Prior to summative assessments ensure teachers provide students with applicable rubrics
6. Commit time and resources for teachers to regularly and formally collaborate on the identification and analysis of course assessment data
7. Increase communication to students and staff of the school-wide expectations across all content areas
8. Evaluate grading practices to align with 21st century learning expectations
9. Continued focus on the development of common assessments

SUPPORT STANDARDS

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

5 School Culture and Leadership

The school culture is equitable and inclusive, and it embodies the school's foundational core values and beliefs about student learning. It is characterized by reflective, collaborative, and constructive dialogue about research-based practices that support high expectations for the learning of all students. The leadership of the school fosters a safe, positive culture by promoting learning, cultivating shared leadership, and engaging all members of the school community in efforts to improve teaching and learning.

1. The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all.

2. The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).

3. There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

4. In order to improve student learning through professional development, the principal and professional staff:
   - engage in professional discourse for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning
   - use resources outside of the school to maintain currency with best practices
   - dedicate formal time to implement professional development
   - apply the skills, practices, and ideas gained in order to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

5. School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning.

6. The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students.

7. Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students.

8. The principal, working with other building leaders, provides instructional leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations.

9. Teachers, students, and parents are involved in meaningful and defined roles in decision-making that promote responsibility and ownership.

10. Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning.

11. The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations.

12. The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school.

CONCLUSIONS

The school community consciously and continuously builds a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high behavioral expectations for all. All doors at BUHS are locked and alarmed. Students may exit, however, if the door is propped open the alarm will sound. Access into the school is through the front door where there is a window to check in. If the window is closed, there is a buzzer and when pushed, someone in the office uses the intercom system to determine entry. There are outdoor cameras, which are monitored to determine whether or not to open the doors. A school resource officer is shared with BUHS, Windham Regional Career Center, and BAMS. A student safety coordinator is responsible for maintaining the cameras, building safety checks, emergency preparedness training for staff, and supervising the BUHS safety officer.   The BUHS safety officer is responsible for building and perimeter security, monitors students in the hallways and removes students from classes if necessary. There are many programs/activities related to improving school climate, which illustrates student pride and ownership in the school. Freshmen First Day introduces new students to the faculty, curriculum, and culture. All freshmen are required to take a one-semester class called Diversity Education; the number one purpose is to develop a common vocabulary for bias awareness education, including issues of diversity, bigotry, and discrimination. The school holds two diversity festivals with a slate of presenters who expose students to diverse cultures, art, music, and theater workshops. Although these festivals are not required, approximately 60 percent of faculty members participates with their classes. When the School Culture and Leadership Committee surveyed professional staff, all agreed the school is safe; 76 percent of the staff indicated they somewhat agree and 24 percent strongly agrees that BUHS culture is safe, positive, respectful and supportive and fosters student responsibility. Across the school community many opportunities have helped to build a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that fosters student responsibility for learning and has resulted in shared ownership, pride, and high behavioral expectations for all. (self-study, student handbook, teachers, students, parents, school board, School Climate Survey)

The school is equitable, inclusive, and fosters heterogeneity where every student over the course of the high school experience is enrolled in a minimum of one heterogeneously grouped core course (English/language arts, social studies, math, science, or world languages).   All students at BUHS are provided access to college-prep level courses. BUHS made the decision to elevate courses to grade-level expectations and began co-teaching in math and English to provide students with IEPs additional support to access college prep courses. Every student at BUHS is enrolled in heterogeneous classes in some core curriculum areas. The world languages courses are innovatively divided into three levels, novice, intermediate, and advanced.   Each of those has two levels within the class, except the advanced, which could have more levels. Classes create heterogeneous groups focusing on developing all students' proficiency in the languages. Both introductory physical science and biology are designed for multi-ability grouping. The content and performance expectations prepare students for a full range of post-secondary opportunities. At BUHS all incoming freshmen are required to take courses in health and diversity and both classes are fully heterogeneous. All social studies classes are heterogeneously grouped and provide the background for advancement. Currently, freshman and sophomore physical education classes are separated by gender. This was a decision made approximately ten years ago when it was determined that the male students tried harder and focused more on PE than the female students. The segregation was done for the female students comfort. As a result of BUHS commitment to providing heterogeneous groupings, students have equitable and inclusive opportunities in many areas. (teachers, self-study, program of studies, curriculum documents)

There is a formal, ongoing program through which each student has an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's

21st century learning expectations. Every BUHS student is assigned to a grade-level advisory consisting of 10 to 14 students. Students remain in the same advisory with the same faculty advisor for four years. This advisory meets for approximately ten minutes every day. At least once or twice a month, thirty-minute extended advisories are held to introduce and deliver career and goal setting curriculum to students by the counseling office. Advisories are also used for morning announcements broadcasted by BUHS-TV. All students are required to attend the advisory period and to remain there unless an advisor issues a pass. Most high school staff members are actively involved in advisories; some as advisors and some as support personnel. The goals of the advisory system are to create a structured group in a warm, caring, friendly environment in which advisors relate to students on a variety of levels, help personalize the students' school experiences, assist with academics, and help students become better self-advocates. As a result of the formal advisory program, all students have an adult in the school, in addition to the school counselor, who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, Navigation 101 Advisory Structure and Description, student handbook, students, classroom observations).

The BUHS principal and professional staff engage in professional development to improve student learning by engaging in professional discussions for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning. This is done using resources inside and outside of the school such as various local college courses, workshops, seminars, online classes, and BUHS sponsored training. Professional staff dedicate time to implement professional development strategies into their classrooms and train other teachers in best practice methods. Each staff member is allowed $1,400 a year for coursework plus $150 a year for travel to and from those courses. The majority of staff takes advantage of the professional development opportunities. Contractually, one percent of the base salary is available primarily for curriculum work that serves the school action plan. Teachers submit a request to the department chairperson who then presents it to the Teacher Curriculum Committee who ultimately approves qualifying requests. Examples of acceptable use may include departmental curriculum work, interdisciplinary curriculum work, and technology integration. Although there are sufficient opportunities to improve student learning through professional development, teachers do not have the opportunity to engage in professional discussion for reflection, inquiry, and analysis of teaching and learning. Until teachers are provided with a more effective means of collaborating to discuss their teaching practice with each other, professional development opportunities will have a limited impact on instruction. (self-study, teachers, faculty coursework & conference data, school board).

School leaders regularly use research-based evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. Administrators at BUHS use the WSESU Criteria for Supervision and Evaluation document to communicate with teachers and to promote continuity and common terminology. Part of the formal evaluation includes pre- and post-evaluation meetings with the evaluator and the teacher. However, administrators' other duties often interfere with scheduled appointments and observations, causing them to be canceled and then rescheduled. Evaluation patterns vary significantly among departments and individual teachers. The new teachers all indicated that this year the administration is using the evaluation process that is in place. However veteran staff members indicated that some teachers are observed and evaluated during their evaluation year, while others reported that either they are not evaluated, or the evaluation process is rushed and may not provide useful feedback. Informal snap shots occur regularly during which administrators visit classrooms for limited periods of time. The principal indicated that while they may be looking for certain best practices, they realize they may not see them every time. These informal visits are not part of the formal evaluations. As a result, although administrators have a specific evaluation protocol in place, there are inconsistencies surrounding the evaluation and supervision processes that focus on improved student learning. (district administrators, school leadership team, self-study, teachers)

The organization of time supports research-based instruction, professional collaboration among teachers, and the learning needs of all students. The daily schedule is a hybrid, combining a 10-minute advisory and four 85-minute blocks, which are divided into two 40-minute periods for some courses – both semester courses and year-long period and block-length classes. The school day begins at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Students have access to the building beginning at 8:00 a.m. Teachers must arrive by 8:35 a.m. and stay until 4:05 p.m Monday through Thursday; Friday they may leave at 3:45 p.m. This schedule has provided the opportunity for faculty to create a multitude of courses for student learning opportunities. The block schedule also provides opportunities for inquiry-based learning. A student's study hall time may not coincide with a teacher's planning-time; the only opportunity for many students to meet teachers outside of class is during office hours after school two or three days a week, and even this may be limited by students' after-school commitments and lack of transportation. Because of this, the school has implemented a call-back program called ACE, by extending advisory to 40 minutes every Tuesday and Thursday; students are allowed access to their teachers for curricular needs. Teachers indicated that the only time they have to meet with each other is twice a month as a department, and there is no time to meet to work on cross-disciplinary work. Currently, no time is built into the school day to collaborate. However, many faculty members have collaborated on their own time. Currently, a scheduling committee is investigating the possible changing of the hybrid block schedule. Some members of the committee believed that test scores are driving the change back to a more traditional block schedule. Other committee members highlighted the challenge of scheduling students to maximize learning opportunities in the school day as a factor. As a result, the organization of time does support research-based instruction and the learning needs of all students, but does not support professional collaboration among teachers and the learning needs of all students. (teachers, student handbook, standard subcommittee, self-study)

Student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. The average class size at BUHS is 16 to 20 students. Advanced Placement classes or high level sciences may have significantly smaller class enrollment. Band and chorus may have significantly higher class enrollment. Some class enrollments are capped due to lab size and/or safety issues. The staff indicated that they feel the class sizes are reasonable and they are able to meet all student needs. A typical teacher teaches three blocks per semester. A teacher may have two or three preps per semester. A teacher has an 80-minute planning time, however 40 minutes of that planning time is used as assigned duty time for one semester of the assigned year. As a result of mindful scheduling, BUHS student load and class size enable teachers to meet the learning needs of individual students. (self-study, teachers, student handbook)

The principal, working with other building leaders, provides leadership that is rooted in the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. The principal frequently refers to the school's core values and expects the staff and students to know them and understand why they are important. He also knows the BUHS core values are evolving, not monolithic, and continues to be open to making changes that are in the best interest of the BUHS community. The principal is seen by teachers as crafting a vision for the school and knowing the value of bringing in people whose strengths help to incorporate and support the core values. He has created a strong building leadership team comprised of people who work well together to support the school's core values and student learning expectations. Office support staff members describe the principal as open, honest, receptive, accessible, and definitely provides leadership for improvement. Students see the principal as being very approachable and accessible. He also facilitates a group of 25 students interested in developing their own leadership skills. As a result of his leadership style, the school community supports the principal and is eager to work with him in the evolution of the school's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations. (students, teachers, standard subcommittee, school support staff)

Teachers, students, and parents involvement in decision-making at BUHS varies. The principal has worked hard to create a strong leadership team that includes teachers, administrators, and counselors. Currently, the administrative team and department leaders bring initiatives for feedback to their department members. Faculty indicated that decision-making is a collaborative process, and teachers had a direct role in helping to create the core values. Teachers are frequently involved in meaningful dialogue and decision-making. Opportunities for student decision-making is somewhat limited. One opportunity for student decision-making includes the Restorative Justice program in which students are trained peer mediators and work together to make decisions and recommendations to a peer who has violated a school rule. The Save Our Planet group of students raised money and worked with administration to purchase filtered water fountains that fill water bottles thus reducing the need for plastic bottles. The BUHS student council is another opportunity for students to promote student interests, to provide opportunities for community service, and to represent students on the BUHS school board. Two students a month attend school board meetings; they are well respected and the school board welcomes their input. While there are many opportunities for parents to learn about the school and its initiatives, there are very low levels of parental participation and there are limited opportunities for parents to give or receive feedback. The opportunities for teachers to have meaningful roles and substantial input into the decision-making process has allowed the school to make great strides in coordinating school culture improvement efforts, and when students and parents are given more leadership opportunities, the school will gain the valuable contribution of these two groups. (parents, students, self-study, teachers, school leadership team)

Teachers exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. Brattleboro Union High School has a faculty with diverse interests, expertise, and experiences that they share with the student body. Within each department there are numerous offerings, and school-wide initiatives contribute to the culture of the school and the learning opportunities for its students. Recent initiatives include a dual enrollment course called Dimension of Social Change in which BUHS students are trained to teach younger students (grades 4 through 8), and the anti-bullying program that they have designed. Twelve times a semester the elementary students travel to BUHS for a 50-minute lesson that includes social competency work. This course is co-taught by the superintendent and an adjunct professor from a local college. Another initiative is themed sports nights focusing on addressing hazing and substance abuse, and all-school assemblies dealing with diversity issues and homophobia. Teachers take initiative and show leadership through numerous travel-study opportunities which include trips to Cuba, Dallas, London, Costa Rica, Belize¸ Germany¸ Switzerland, and China. While teachers have shown extraordinary creativity in embracing the school's social and civic core values, more work needs to be done supporting the same type of coordination for the school's academic learning expectations. The school community must work together toward common academic goals in support of the Common Core and increasing rigor across all curricular areas. As a result of teacher initiatives and leadership, students have multiple effective ways to increase their engagement and learning. (self-study, classroom observations, teachers, district administrators)

The school board, superintendent, and principal are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. The principal meets weekly with the superintendent, career-center director, and middle school principal to review campus logistics and goals. The principal is also part of a supervisory union-wide team of administrators that discusses issues related to all grades K through 12. Faculty and staff indicated that the school board is seen to be fairly collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school learning expectations, while the superintendent and principal were judged to demonstrate a greater degree of commitment to these

principles. The school board members see their responsibility to develop policy, to stay informed and apprised of school programs and events, but insist that the day-to-day operations of the school be left to the building administrators and educators. Several faculty and staff members credit the principal for welcoming new staff, for being willing to view challenges from multiple perspectives, and for responding to issues in a timely manner. As a result, the school board, superintendent, and principal collectively are collaborative, reflective, and constructive in achieving the school's 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, faculty/staff survey-October 2012, district administrators, school board, parents)

The school board and superintendent provide the principal with sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. The school board chairman indicated that the board's role is an advisor – it leaves the decision-making of the school to the experts. The school board's main focus is reviewing and presenting the $27.2 million budget to its constituents. Board members are supportive of the high school's budget, and they believe it is well thought out and supports all students. The school board stated they are ambassadors in the community for the high school. The BUHS principal has the support and confidence of the school board and superintendent. The school board and superintendent have been clear that the principal is responsible for the instructional program, including teacher hiring and evaluations as well as for setting priorities for funded professional-development projects. The board and superintendent recognize the principal as the person who has the most in-depth understanding of the school and its students, teachers, and programs. As a result, the school board and superintendent provide the principal with autonomy and sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school. (school board, self-study, principal, teachers, school support staff)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The BUHS school culture that consciously works on building a safe, positive, respectful, and supportive climate for their students and staff
2. The priority of school and student safety exemplified by building upgrades, adequate staff, and staff training in place
3. The faculty's and staff's creative and energetic spirit which results in shared ownership and high expectations for students
4. The school pride evident by opportunities for student and staff that foster community service
5. The opportunities for students to formally connect with adults in daily advisories during which they focus on building relationships
6. The considerable commitment to eliminate leveling within most classes at BUHS
7. The fostering of heterogeneity and every student has the opportunity to participate in heterogeneous core classes
8. The provision of significant funds for professional development for teachers to use to access instruction and to maintain best practices
9. The current school schedule that supports flexible learning and instructional time
10. The adequate and appropriate student loads and class sizes
11. The many opportunities at BUHS for students to enrich their learning with travel, community service, dual enrollment at a local colleges, and online courses
12. The principal who has a clear vision that is regularly conveyed to students, staff and parents and is rooted in the school's core values and beliefs
13. The principal who has the autonomy and sufficient decision-making authority to lead the school
14. The principal, superintendent, and school board who have a constructive and respectful relationship that is focused on ensuring every student has success achieving his or her goals

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop opportunities that incorporate common planning and collaboration time for staff in addition to time provided during in-service or after-school meetings
2. Ensure meaningful, regular and timely evaluations, and feedback for all teachers
3. Develop ways to increase parent participation in meaningful discussions about school initiatives and decisions that impact their students
4. Increase opportunities for students to contribute in meaningful ways to the school's leadership and decision-making
5. Create opportunities for teachers to exercise initiative and leadership, especially with civic and social work
6. Develop creative ways to support teacher leadership to increase the coordination of common approaches to assisting students in their achievement of the school's academic learning expectations

6 School Resources for Learning

Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of coordinated programs and services. These resources enhance and improve student learning and well-being and support the school's core values and beliefs. Student support services enable each student to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

1. The school has timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students, that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations.

2. The school provides information to families, especially to those most in need, about available student support services.

3. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student.

4. School counseling services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
   - deliver a written, developmental program
   - meet regularly with students to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling
   - engage in individual and group meetings with all students
   - deliver collaborative outreach and referral to community and area mental health agencies and social service providers
   - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

5. The school's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
   - provide preventative health services and direct intervention services
   - use an appropriate referral process
   - conduct ongoing student health assessments
   - use ongoing, relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

6. Library/media services are integrated into curriculum and instructional practices and have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:
   - are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum
   - provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum
   - ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school
   - are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning
   - conduct ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

7.   Support services for identified students, including special education, Section 504 of the ADA, and English language learners, have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:

- collaborate with all teachers, counselors, targeted services, and other support staff in order to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations
- provide inclusive learning opportunities for all students
- perform ongoing assessment using relevant data, including feedback from the school community, to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations.

CONCLUSIONS

BUHS has a variety of timely, coordinated, and directive intervention strategies for all students, including identified and at-risk students that support each student's achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations. The ACE block and advisory allow students time in small groups as a way to build community and to receive support on academics. Title 1 services are available to students who do not meet the criteria for special education services but who need help with their academic classes. Funding for this program will change, as the district has committed to maintain services these services through the district budget. School counselors meet regularly with students to help them with college readiness, career planning and social/emotional issues. Restorative Justice is an alternative means of learning how to resolve conflicts and repair relationships. The Educational Support Team (EST) is a team approach used to identify the possibility for intervention when students are struggling academically and are not already receiving special education services or are on a 504 plan. Virtual High School, Community-Based Learning, Adult Learning, and dual enrollment with a local college are all examples of programs offering alternative educational pathways that allow students to succeed in school in a variety of independent ways. The state of Vermont is moving toward this flexible pathways approach to graduation, and BUHS is well-positioned for this initiative. The BUHS English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) helps students reach proficiency in language when the primary language is not English. This program also provides academic support to students with their studies and helps families to access community resources. Vermont Student Assistance Corp (VSAC) and Upward Bound are programs that assist BUHS students who are the first-generation in their families to go to college and who have particular hardships that may create roadblocks toward their goal of attending college. Clinicians and health services staff meet with referred students to provide services that address the students' mental and physical well-being. The Student Assistance Program (SAP) counselor is available to deal with drug and alcohol-related issues. Teachers at BUHS report a concern with the lack of academic support available to students outside of the school day. Although BUHS has an adequate number of supports for all students, including identified IEP and 504 students, additional support both outside of the school day and for when Title 1 services (Academic Support) is no longer funded, better coordination of the supports will enable all students to have the opportunity to achieve 21st century learning expectations. (self-study, teachers, school support staff, student handbook, parents, district administration)

BUHS provides information to families about student support services using multiple formats. Students are given a handbook/planner at the beginning of each school year that contains information provided to families about services available for their students. Other information is provided through a newsletter (both mailed home and posted online), the school website, and the parent portal in PowerSchool, as well as a Facebook page. Information is also disseminated during parent/teacher conferences and school-wide open houses. The recent hiring of a home/school interventionist shows considerable effort to connect with at-risk students and their families. Although the school provides information to families, the information contained on the school's website and in various other formats does not address how to initiate student support services, and when this is in place, all families and students will have equitable access to the supports needed to achieve 21st century learning skills. (website, Facebook page, newsletter, student handbook, self-study)

Brattleboro Union High School support services staff seeks out and uses a wide variety of technology, software, and web tools to ensure that they deliver an effective range of services for each student. Staff and students are enthusiastic about the recent hiring of a technology integration specialist to assist staff members in implementing new technology. The counseling staff uses PowerSchool for providing important academic and attendance information to families through the parent portal. This program also allows families to reach out to the school staff. The counseling office also uses its website and

online newsletters to keep everyone informed of college representative visits, dual enrollment opportunities, online classes, and the High School Completion program. Naviance and Vermont Guidance Central are two important programs that are used at BUHS to assist students with online scheduling and the college readiness process. The health office uses the PowerSchool system to update student health alerts, check student schedules, access contact information, and log student visits. The nurses and health staff also use the First Class e-mail system to coordinate services with other staff members. The Title 1 services coordinator is available to work with students who are not eligible for direct services but who need help with academic classes. They provide computers for students to work on classwork and homework. The ESOL department offers case management for students from the many countries who are part of the diverse BUHS community. They work within content classes and they help to teach the terminology of those subjects. They also work with the families of the students in ways which include helping with education, insurance, assistance programs, and culture orientation. The reading teacher provides one-on-one time with students to work on decoding, but there appears to be limited access to updated material for these students, such as online programs that the students can work with at home. BUHS has recently hired an interventionist who is working with students, helping them to become more successful in attending school. PowerSchool is a great resource to help staff keep track of tardies and absences. With this information, the faculty can reach out to a student's family and intervene, forge a relationship, and help the student eliminate any roadblocks that may prevent them from being successful in achieving the 21st century learning expectations. Support services staff use technology to deliver an effective range of coordinated services for each student, therefore keeping the students on track toward achieving the 21st century learning skills. (panel presentation, teacher interview, school support staff, self-study)

The school counseling department has an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff who meet regularly to provide personal, academic, career, and college counseling services. The counselors split the caseload so that two counselors have seniors/sophomores and two have freshmen/juniors which allows each of them to have one group that is time intensive, and one group that is less so. There is a written, developmental program delivered in advisories that helps to prepare students for career and college readiness, but this is not where most of their time is spent. The counselors meet with students regularly to provide academic, career and college counseling advice. They do this by bringing class groups into the counseling conference area, working with students individually in their offices, going to the classrooms, and meeting with the families. Dealing with students' immediate personal issues is where most of the time is spent, and although this department has sufficient staff to provide a variety of wraparound services, there is some imbalance in the caseload that may cause some students to go under-served. Counselors are well aware of not having enough time to reach identified at-risk students. The Student Assistance Program (SAP) counselor meets with students who have been referred for alcohol and drug issues, and acts as a liaison between the school and the community agencies. Improved technology allows the counseling staff to reach out to parents in several ways. They can send alerts via the alert system, emails via PowerSchool, letters through the mail, notices on the website, and notices on Naviance.

The BUHS building provides facility space for both VSAC and Upward Bound, and this allows more wrap-around services for students who are college bound but are the first in their families to go through the college process. ESOL is a great resource for the students and the support staff. Not only does it help students reach proficiency in language, but also it is involved in a student's life. If there is a family situation that is getting in the way of the student's learning, these teachers reach out by visiting with the family at the home. They also help the support staff by providing extra wrap-around services. The social worker meets with students, counselors, and teaching staff in a collaborative manner in order to gather information and to develop solutions that involve mental health, DCF, food assistance, homelessness, pregnancy, poverty, violence, and other socio-economic issues. Counselors work with

Vocational Rehab to help students with post-high school transition. Beyond the senior exit surveys, there is no evidence of a formal system that allows for feedback from the school community and other stakeholders and that helps to improve services. The school counseling services adequately meets the students' needs; however, developing a formal system that allows for feedback from the school community and other stakeholders will improve services and will ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. (teacher interviews, school support staff, central office personnel, standard subcommittee)

The school's health service department consists of two full-time licensed registered nurses, one part-time licensed registered nurse and one full-time health clerk who provide services to BUHS, BAMS, and WRCC students. Direct services provided by health center staff include monitoring blood pressure, treating minor cuts and burns, assessing injuries from home and school, evaluating students for suspected use of drugs/alcohol, and treating minor illnesses such as colds and sore throats. Each student encounter is used as an opportunity to provide health and prevention education. The health office follows guidelines set by the Vermont Department of Health's School Health Standards. Brattleboro Union High School's health services have an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff. These services provide adequate prevention and direct intervention care to students.

Referrals to the health office can come from teachers, primary care physicians, mental health counselors and family members. The health office makes referrals to various community providers as needed with parent permission. The health office also utilizes PowerSchool in order to communicate with teachers and other service providers within the school about students with specific conditions (with parent permission). The BUHS health office has an appropriate referral system in place to meets the needs of students.

The health office provides health screenings and maintains student health records. The nurses track students' immunization and health status and compile reports as requested by the Vermont Department of Health. School nurses attend multiple special education team meetings as needed for health concerns. Health office staff members participate in the crisis team, drug and alcohol prevention team, truancy team and the district health and wellness committee. Nurses meet weekly with administration, counselors and clinicians to coordinate plans and share information about individual student needs. The school's health services staff conduct appropriate and ongoing health assessments designed to guide and direct preventative services for students.

The health office utilizes the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and awareness of local community issues as a guide for current areas to address. Membership in the National Association of School Nurses provides information on current trends in school nursing. By keeping current with trends in school health, the nurses assess and make improvements to the health office services as needed. PowerSchool is also used to monitor student attendance and grades. Health office visits are tracked to identify particular students who might be at risk. The BUHS health office uses ongoing relevant data from assessments to improve services and to ensure that health curriculum and services are in place to support each student as he/she works to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.
(website, teachers, counselors, self-study, State of Vermont School Health Services Manual, Section 25)

The professional staffing of library/media   is adequate to provide a wide range of materials and support and to be responsive to curriculum needs with the information she is able to acquire; however,

the library/media personnel are not formally integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices. The librarian relies on personal initiative and informal contacts to gain access to teachers and classes for research skills and information literacy instruction as well as to develop the collection to respond to curriculum needs. Instituting a reliable and consistent system for including the librarian in the curriculum planning process and for providing her with information about curriculum changes and additions in a timely manner so that the collection can be developed will more efficiently and effectively enable students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The library provides 30,000 volumes, numerous subscription databases and multiple periodical subscriptions to support the curriculum. There are also over 500 DVDs, 100 audio books as well as e-readers with over 50 e-books available. The library has 24 computers available for student walk-in use. There are also two computer labs for class use with a total of 44 computers. Both labs are equipped with LCD projectors and one has a touch-screen SMART Board. The library also has five laptops available for students to check out for a week at a time, which are equipped with an Internet card to allow home access. The librarian frequently provides book carts with resources pulled from the collection for teachers to bring to their classrooms in order to facilitate research on a specific topic (21 carts provided in 2012-2013). The librarian also provides tutorials to classes on using the databases (28 presented during 2012-2013) and book talks on popular fiction or nonfiction books (126 book talks in 2012-2013). The librarian attempts to engage new teachers directly to make them aware of the services available via targeted flyers and emails. To supplement the collection further, the librarian also borrows materials from other libraries throughout the state via Inter Library Loan (i.e.,219 books were borrowed through interlibrary loan and eight were loaned to other libraries during 2012-2013). The library provides a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum, giving students the essential resources and tools to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations.

Students, faculty and support staff have regular access to the library, which is open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There were 25,826 individual student sign-ins and 168 class visits during the 2012-2013 school year. This provides access both before and after school in addition to during the school day. The large library space has twelve tables for student use as well as a designated area for students who bring their own laptops. There are also three private study rooms for student or staff use as needed as well as the above mentioned computer labs. The librarian has also created an online presence, which further extends the library's availability outside of school hours for those who have access to the Internet outside of school. Therefore, the library facility is available and staffed for students and teachers before, during, and after school. Additionally, access to the library's resources such as databases and the library's catalog of books and periodicals are available 24/7 for those with Internet access.

Library services are responsive to student needs in order to support independent learning. The librarian frequently provides recommendations for both academic and pleasure reading via book talks (126 book talks in 2012-2013) and offers instruction to both individuals and classes in using the library's online resources. Individual students may come to the library for one-on-one instruction and help with research during study hall with a pass from a content teacher as well as before or after school. The librarian has also developed a web presence that is continuously growing in order to serve the needs of students and teachers outside of the working hours of the library. The library's services are responsive to the needs and interests of students and help to further the school's 21st century learning expectations. The librarian uses various methods to continuously improve services and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations. The library's automated management system, Alexandria, allows for the creation of numerous reports on circulation statistics, which help to drive

collection development. The librarian is also able to take advantage of Follett's TitleWave collection analysis service in order to get a more detailed report on the average age of the collection as well as where in the collection more resources may be needed. The librarian actively seeks student and faculty input for collection development. More than 1,139 new titles were added to the collection in 2012-2013, many in direct response to suggestions and requests. However, the librarian feels that additional feedback from students and staff, perhaps in the form of post-class surveys, is needed to guide future changes in the library collection and procedures. The library conducts ongoing assessment to improve instruction and services while helping teachers and students to succeed with the school's 21st century learning expectations. The library is well-staffed and resourced to provide students with excellent opportunities to achieve the school's learning expectations. (website, students, librarian, library yearly report, self-study, teachers)

There is an adequate number of certified/licensed personnel and support staff at BUHS with adequate resources. There are two teachers for English Language Learners, one speech and language pathologist, and one .8 FTE educational evaluator, two special education coordinators and one part-time 504 coordinator. Additionally, there are 12 special education teachers, one special education administrator, and two in-house clerical support persons. There is a district director of special services and an assistant director of special services who coordinate all special education personnel. Additionally, there is one district K through 12 special education coordinator. BUHS has 24 support services para-educators who provide support both in the general and special education settings. Special educators at BUHS have an average caseload of 13 students.

Student referrals for special education are handled according to Vermont state law regarding identification and services. Students are rated by their sending school into three tiers depending on their individual level of need. The BUHS special education administrator is also part of Educational Support Team (EST), which works to ensure that all students meet the 21st century learning expectations. EST meetings may include counseling staff, health services staff, ESOL staff, social worker, special education administration, *Restorative Justice* coordinator

Within the past year the special education department has moved from a program-based model to a needs-based model for all special education students. This model allows for special education students' needs to be addressed in an array of settings in the least-restrictive environment. Special education students, depending on their needs, have access to a continuum of services which range from direct basic skills instruction in reading, writing, math, science, social studies, speech, language and social skills, to full inclusion in the mainstream classroom with support and accommodations. Within the general education classroom, special education students have access to technology for enhanced access to the curriculum if specified in the IEP.

Due to the elimination of the remedial levels of English and math, there is now a co-teaching model that allows for special educators to co-teach with classroom teachers. This allows an identified population to have inclusive learning opportunities at a more rigorous level. Special education staff are required by law to maintain specific information about each student's progress and to regularly update student IEPs. However, beyond the senior exit surveys, BUHS is still in process of identifying other meaningful sources of data to help improve services for all students in the community. (teacher interview, panel presentation, school support staff)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The full range of complete wrap-around support services addressing student social/emotional issues
2. The advisory group as a way for students to stay connected to the school and to develop a relationship with faculty and other students
3. The Restorative Justice program and its non-punitive approach to helping students resolve problems and mend relationships
4. The several educational pathways through which a student can gain credits toward graduation
5. The counseling department's proactive student outreach effort
6. The creation of a room within the health services department for students in crisis
7. The efforts of the librarian to work with teachers as well as to maintain and develop the collection to reflect changes in curriculum
8. The addition of the ACE period as an in-school remedial support mechanism
9. The actions taken by the district to maintain some school support services in the district budget that were provided by Title I funding in the past

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Explore additional means of providing academic support to students within and beyond the school day
2. Develop a formal assessment system that allows for feedback from the school community and other stakeholders to help improve support service programs and to ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations
3. Provide additional information in communications to families to ensure access to support services more equitable
4. Develop a reliable system for integrating the librarian's services into curriculum planning and development in all subject areas
5. Examine counseling caseloads to make sure all students have access to the supports necessary for their social/emotional needs
6. Discuss and refine the purpose of the variety of support and remediation programs that help students to achieve the academic, civil and social learning expectations
7. Ensure that time is dedicated to the implementation of the written developmental guidance program
8. Identify sources of data that will allow the school to identify and monitor the students who are at risk

 Community Resources for Learning

The achievement of the school's 21st century learning expectations requires active community, governing board, and parent advocacy. Through dependable and adequate funding, the community provides the personnel, resources, and facilities to support the delivery of curriculum, instruction, programs, and services.

1. The community and the district's governing body provide dependable funding for:
    - a wide range of school programs and services
    - sufficient professional and support staff
    - ongoing professional development and curriculum revision
    - a full range of technology support
    - sufficient equipment
    - sufficient instructional materials and supplies.

2. The school develops, plans, and funds programs:
    - to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant
    - to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment
    - to keep the school clean on a daily basis.

3. The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses:
    - programs and services
    - enrollment changes and staffing needs
    - facility needs
    - technology
    - capital improvements.

4. Faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget.

5. The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services.

6. The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

7. All professional staff actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school.

8. The school develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The community and the district's governing body supporting Brattleboro Union High School, provide dependable funding for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies. Brattleboro Union High School District 6 has a supportive community that includes the greater Brattleboro area along with the towns of Dummerston, Guilford, Putney, and Vernon, Vermont whose representatives and stakeholders provide supportive funding for its high school as evidenced by the school budgets passing consistently for the past seventeen years with slight increases. Throughout the budget building process, the district's business manager provides detailed information on the impact on the tax rate based on the increases in the proposed budget. Attrition reductions in staff have occurred in math, science, MCL, English and one administrative position due to enrollment declines, but there have been no teacher layoffs or cuts in academic programs. In addition to a $56 million redesign and renovation project passed by voters in 2001 and funded through local, state, and federal funds, increases have occurred in services for student assistance programs and technology support. Individual departments develop five-to-seven year action plans in coordination with the BUHS action plan and, based on projected enrollment, budget for textbooks and educational supplies. Departments reported that the facilities, supplies, and instructional equipment are adequate. The district provides adequate professional development opportunities to professional staff with funding for course reimbursement (up to three graduate credits per year), as well as offers professional development grants to teachers through a One Percent Program. The projected 1:1 computer initiative program will require more professional development dedicated to technology integration. Two technology coordinators oversee operations of the computer systems, and a technology integration specialist supports the integration of technology in classrooms in accordance with BUHS' 21st century learning expectations. Faculty, staff and students have access to computers in classrooms, three computer labs, portable computer labs, departmental laptops on carts, notebooks, and iPads. Classrooms are also equipped with network and closed circuit televisions and have access to a variety of audio/video formats. The art department offers a television production class and broadcasts BUHS News three days a week during advisory. Dependable funding is provided by the community and the district's governing body for a wide range of school programs and services, sufficient professional and support staff, ongoing professional development and curriculum revision, a full range of technology support, sufficient equipment, and sufficient instructional materials and supplies which result in the ability of BUHS student's to meet the school's 21st century learning expectations successfully. (Annual Report 2012, school board, self-study, school policy manuals, Endicott survey)

BUHS develops, plans, and funds programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment, and to keep the school clean on a daily basis. BUHS has a facility and maintenance manager who is responsible for the buildings, grounds and custodial staff. He effectively and purposefully coordinates and supervises his own staff, and also collaborates with the food service director in order to move recycling reforms forward. He meets weekly with the principals and an online maintenance reporting program called "School Dude" is used to track faculty and staff maintenance requests. His staff is comprised of a four full-time day crew, including an electrician, a carpenter and two custodians. There are two full-time grounds staff and five to seven night employees plus a night manager. The facility manager reports that requests for resources are generally funded based on his presentation of well-thought out plans and anticipated outcomes. There is a five-year detailed plan that outlines maintenance and a replacement schedule as well as capital improvements. As a result of BUHS's commitment to developing, planning, and funding programs to ensure the maintenance and repair of the building and school plant, to properly maintain, catalogue, and replace equipment and to keep the school clean on a daily basis, students are

ensured of a safe and pleasant learning environment. (standard subcommittee, five-year maintenance budget, facility tour)

The community funds and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs and facility needs, and capital improvements. Since the school technology plan is incomplete, a more comprehensive technology plan is being developed. BUHS administration and faculty did a NESDEC review to assess administration, staff and class size needs and found that their administration and staff were well within the guidelines (average) while their class size was better than average.   Since they are an identified school, they have generated a school improvement plan using Green Mountain Star. Each department at the high school also has an action plan that is aligned with the school's two-to-four year goals. Not all teachers are on board with learning expectations and assessment initiatives as evidenced by classroom observation and interviews. Examples of initiatives in departmental plans include *Understanding by Design* in the English department, the school-wide extended advisory program utilizing the Naviance program, a school-wide Restorative Justice program, PBiS committee and co-teaching the freshman class in English and math, which partners a content teacher with a special educator. The community has funded all BUHS budgets for the past 17 years. A parent reported that if a budget is turned down, there is another vote and the item is re-instated to the budget. The general community uses BUHS extensively at night and on weekends (craft fair, meetings, yoga); therefore, the community strongly supports the programs and the long- and short-term plan for the building. One area of need that was identified is more technology such as an i-Pad cart for each department and more SMART Boards. The administrative team has an annual staff retreat at which they modify and adjust the short- and long-range plans. The staff and administration has dealt with declining enrollments through attrition rather than outright cuts. Although there is a definite process for the community to fund and the school implements a long-range plan that addresses programs and services, enrollment changes and staffing needs, facility needs, technology and capital improvements. (classroom observation, school support staff, building administrators, program of studies)

The faculty and building administrators of BUHS are actively involved in the development and implementation of the budget. The budget process at Brattleboro Union High School begins in late September when department meetings discuss anticipated needs. The principal sends a memorandum to the staff in early October asking for budget items with justification. The staff is asked to include special and innovative items with justification. Department heads prioritize department faculty requests with a focus on the direction given by the administration and school board. The next step of the budgetary process occurs when the department heads send their budget requests to the principal for review. By the end of October, the principal submits all budgets to the supervisory union's business administrator for review and discussion with the superintendent of schools and the principal makes adjustments. The school board's finance committee considers the budget and holds two public hearings at regular board meetings. At the annual meeting in February, the budget is voted on by the community members present at the meeting. The faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of a budget that results in a safe and pleasant learning environment to successfully meet the school's 21st century learning expectations for all BUHS students. (self-study, teachers, school board, panel presentation, standard committee)

The school site and plant support the delivery of high quality school programs and services. A recent building project included a 40 percent renovation and a 60 percent new building over a four-year period completed in 2007. Reconstruction and renovation included updating outdated and inadequate electrical, heating and ventilation systems, technology wiring and wireless infrastructure, classroom space, handicap accessibility, and support for the present and future programs of the school.

Renovation of the heating and ventilation system included a state of the art Biomass facility, including backup oil heating unit and propane hot water heater. The Biomass facility will be retrofitted next year to allow for more energy efficiency. The science classrooms include lab areas wired for computers and classroom areas. Two rooms are mirror images of each other and allow for large instructional group work between the two classroom areas. The library/media center offers web resources for research, 30,000 books and two computer labs for classroom use. The cafeteria has one serving line that is shared by both the middle school and the high school. Renovations have included a new "green" quarry floor, new lighting, and new equipment that are still being installed. Beyond the core facilities, the visual and performing arts facility is equipped with state-of-the-art sound and theatrical lighting systems. The gymnasium was renovated with new flooring, new bleachers and new paint. Exterior renovations include a new track, grandstand and press box. Three general-purpose lab areas, six department-specific computers carts, and an iPad cart support technology integration. Every three years 100 new laptops are purchased and given to teachers; teacher's old laptops are refurbished and put into department carts. The increased use of technology does present a challenge: network capacity is affected in certain areas of the school when a number of computers are operating at the same time. Special education has five suites located throughout the building including: academic support rooms, a planning room, classrooms for core academic skills instruction, a sensory integration room and two conference rooms.   The school has 72 classrooms located on two floors with four ADA-compliant hydraulic passenger elevators. The counseling department contains facilities for five counselors, the school-based clinician, Student Assistance Program counselor and the registrar. The health office includes an office suite with space for four student beds and three private offices surrounding the treatment area. Administration is located on the first floor and consists of a large front office, two conference rooms, and administrative office suites. The BUHS facility offers a parking lot for 544 vehicles with appropriate lighting and cameras. The faculty and building administrators are actively involved in the development and implementation of a budget that results in better opportunities for students to successfully meet the school's 21st century learning expectations for all BUHS students. (facility tour, library media personnel, self-study, Endicott survey, building administrators)

The school maintains documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations. BUHS' facility manager schedules all required local, state, and federal inspections and maintains documentation. The inspection certificates were posted and up-to-date in the Biomass facility. The science department has a designated person who maintains the storage, distribution, and disposal of chemicals within the department following the FLINN format. Signage throughout the building designates compliance. Inspections and testing for the sprinkler systems, fire alarms, building temperature controls, mechanical systems, including air quality control, generator systems, hazardous materials, and related procedures are maintained in a timely manner. Within the NEASC/Endicott survey, the majority of staff, parent and students strongly agree the school is clean, well maintained and up-to-date. The school's attention to maintenance, repairs and inspections, as well as to appropriate documentation that the physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations results in a safe and pleasant learning environment for all BUHS students. (facilities tour, chemical storage visit, self-study, OSHA and United States Department of Commerce regulations (Exhibit HH and Exhibit KK)

The professional staff at BUHS actively engage parents and families as partners in each student's education and reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school. The parents feel that they are actively engaged in their student's education at Brattleboro Union High School. The professional staff communicates with families utilizing several different pathways: electronic, postal mail, telephone, student projects, and performances. However, due to the level of socioeconomic diversity in the community, there is always a concern that some families may not be receiving the

necessary services. Parents reported that there is an Open House where parents are given all the syllabi for the classes as well as the rubrics that show how their child will be graded. In addition there are parent conferences that parents are encouraged to attend. BUHS does specific outreach to parents by having a parent orientation for the dual enrollment program. PowerSchool has a parent portal so that families can check their children's progress online. The school maintains a website as well as a Facebook page, and individual teachers also maintain websites for their classes which show the class calendar, daily and long term assignments as well as the grading rubrics. Parents, students and teachers often use email to get factual information and to give and receive homework help. The school utilizes the ALERT NOW system to communicate important information to each household. Teachers and parents communicate regarding ACE block to utilize further extra help and attention. The Naviance family program, Diversity class and transition activities are ways that the parents feel that the staff reaches out to engage them in their children's school experience and gives them opportunities to talk with their children regarding school.   There also was a pilot program this past summer for rising 8th graders and current 9th grade students, Introduction to High School Studies, which is a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-based program. In addition, this program provided the opportunity for credit-deficient 9th grade students to recover some course credit to stay on target for graduation. It has a relevant application to local businesses and colleges and effectively engages the student with the general community. Despite all of these efforts, BUHS lost 37 students last year due to dropouts. In response to this increase in dropout rate, efforts have been made to engage disengaged families and students. The staff and administration feel that the 33 percent free and reduced lunch statistic is actually low and that there are many more children in need than are accessing services. This year, a pilot program was started utilizing a family interventionist to engage the most reluctant learners as identified by AIMSWEB data and teacher reporting. The Restorative Justice program also works with students through teacher referral, administrative referral or student self-referrals to work on core values directly with students and re-engage them in school. Although the professional staff at Brattleboro Union High School actively communicates information to parents in an effort to engage parents and families as partners in each student's education, developing and implementing a comprehensive plan to intentionally reach out specifically to those families who have been less connected with the school will allow those students equitable access to achieve the school's 21st century learning expectations. (parents, school support staff, course syllabus, building administrators)

BUHS develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning. However, the school needs to continue to increase student awareness to increase the number of students who take advantage of these learning opportunities. Parents feel that they can attend any school board meeting and their voice will be heard. They are invited in often to learn and participate with and alongside their children. BUHS does specific outreach to parents by having a parent orientation for the dual enrollment program. There are over 30 student- and parent-led clubs at BUHS. These clubs support music, sports, art and also special interests of students. BUHS has developed and maintains a partnership with higher education through its participation in the Windham Regional Collegiate High School that offers 39 courses for students to choose from. The school actively engages with students and parents to create a community sculpture (the rooster) as well as art shows, collaborative arts days and music/theater performances. BUHS also offers a Community-Based Learning Program for 16 to 20 students each year. This program allows students to get real world experiences in the community and helps build positive relationships with community mentors. Community-Based Learning is open to all students, but it is the at–risk population that is targeted for this program. Every student is required to complete 40 hours of community service that allows him or her to make meaningful connections to the community. The local mental health center (HCRS) staff's site-based clinicians at both the middle and high school create a link between the school community and mental health services. A school resource officer at BUHS creates a link to law enforcement. The Restorative Justice program works with students with behavioral needs, both in the school and in the greater Brattleboro community. The pilot program this past summer for incoming 9th grade students,

Introduction to High School Studies, a STEM- based program also effectively engages the student with the local businesses, colleges and general community. The school has established business partnerships through special education, which offers a vibrant job shadowing and school-to-work program through which students can earn a stipend for jobs in the community. This program serves 8 to 10 students and there are 20 available sites. The school partners with The Brattleboro Area Coalition (substance abuse), HCRS (mental health), sport and music boosters (parents), and the Diversity Issues Team to offer help with advertising, events and space to hold the events. The students at BUHS are encouraged to take advantage of the resources offered in the greater Brattleboro area through their individual classes, as a part of school curricula and based on their own personal interests. BUHS develops productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning, and when all staff members are able to articulate the available programs to students, all BUHS students will have an equitable opportunity to achieve the school's identified 21st century learning expectations. (student handbook, teacher interviews, administrators)

COMMENDATIONS

1. The community and district's governing body's historical dependable funding in support of the school's school programs and services
2. The School Dude tracking system for maintenance requests and repairs in a timely manner
3. The detailed budget and five-year maintenance schedules providing a systematic approach to maintaining the facility
4. The expert carpenter and master electrician who are members of the maintenance staff
5. The development and implementation of a budget that actively involves the faculty and building administrators
6. The BUHS school leadership team's collaborative development of the long-range plan
7. The compliance of BUHS physical plant and facilities with federal, state and local fire, health and safety regulations
8. The school site and plant's support of the high quality school programs and services
9. The earning of an Energy Star Award for renovating the heating system, including an energy efficient Biomass facility
10. The multiple opportunities, by the use of social media, for the parents and community to share and experience student learning by attending performances, art shows and collaborative activities
11. The numerous opportunities for students to develop community partnerships
12. The partnerships with the local mental health center (HCRS), Division of Children and Families (DCF), Brattleboro Area Coalition (Above the Influence), multiple parent-led groups (boosters), and student-led groups
13. The building availability for community events such as a craft fair or meeting place for organizations
14. The pilot of the 9th grade summer course, Introduction to High School and of the family interventionist program as ways for students to connect or reconnect with BUHS
15. The Naviance family program used in teacher advisories as a way for teachers and students to plan for the students' future
16. The Restorative Justice program's outreach to students in need and its work with them on core values in order to re-engage with the school and/or community

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to fund professional development for curriculum revision and technology integration
2. Implement demographic analysis to prepare for a change in population
3. Complete a network capacity assessment and implement recommendations from the analysis to address issues of frequent down time
4. Complete the development of school and district short-term and long-term technology plans
5. Create an outreach plan to communicate with all families with challenging socio-economic circumstances and with those students most in need
6. Examine ways in which the staff and administration can increase student participation in the extensive programs that are available as a result of the productive parent, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support student learning

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

This comprehensive evaluation report reflects the findings of the school's self-study and those of the visiting committee. It provides a blueprint for the faculty, administration, and other officials to use to improve the quality of programs and services for the students in Brattleboro Union High School. The faculty, school board, and superintendent should be apprised by the building administration yearly of progress made addressing visiting committee recommendations.

Since it is in the best interest of the students that the citizens of the district become aware of the strengths and limitations of the school and suggested recommendations for improvement, the Committee requires that the evaluation report be made public in accordance with the Committee's Policy on Distribution, Use and Scope of the Visiting Committee Report.

A school's initial/continued accreditation is based on satisfactory progress implementing valid recommendations of the visiting committee and others identified by the Committee as it monitors the school's progress and changes which occur at the school throughout the decennial cycle. To monitor the school's progress in the Follow-Up Program the Committee requires that the principal of Brattleboro Union High School submit routine Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports documenting the current status of all evaluation report recommendations, with particular detail provided for any recommendation which may have been rejected or those items on which no action has been taken. In addition, responses must be detailed on all recommendations highlighted by the Committee in its notification letters to the school. School officials are expected to have completed or be in the final stages of completion of all valid visiting committee recommendations by the time the Five-Year Progress Report is submitted. The Committee may request additional Special Progress Reports if one or more of the Standards are not being met in a satisfactory manner or if additional information is needed on matters relating to evaluation report recommendations or substantive changes in the school.

To ensure that it has current information about the school, the Committee has an established Policy on Substantive Change requiring that principals of member schools report to the Committee within sixty days (60) of occurrence any substantive change which negatively impacts on the school's adherence to the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of substantive change must describe the change itself and detail any impact which the change has had on the school's ability to meet the Standards for Accreditation. The Committee's Substantive Change Policy is included in the Appendix on page xx. All other substantive changes should be included in the Two- and Five-Year Progress Reports and/or the Annual Report which is required of each member school to ensure that the Committee office has current statistical data on the school.

The Committee urges school officials to establish a formal follow-up program at once to review and implement all findings of the self-study and valid recommendations identified in the evaluation report. An outline of the Follow-Up Program is available in the Committee's *Accreditation Handbook* which was given to the school at the onset of the self-study. Additional direction regarding suggested procedures and reporting requirements is provided at Follow-Up Seminars offered by Committee staff following the on-site visit.

Brattleboro Union High School
NEASC Accreditation Visit
Novermber 17-20, 2013

Visiting Committee

Brian Beck Hopkins Academy Hadley, MA	JoAnne Ladd Mascoma Valley High School Canaan, NH 03741
Sally Rivard Lake Region Union High School Orleans, VT 05859	John Lewis Spaulding High School Barre, VT 05641
Kevin Cook Burlington High School Burlington, VT 05408	Connie Carson Sanborn Regional School District Kingston, NH 03848
Virginia Knapp Twin Valley High School Wilmington, VT 05363	Judy Mullen North Country Union High School Newport, VT 05855
Cynthia Alkire Coventry High School Coventry, CT 06238	Debra Coyne ConVal High School Peterborough, NH 03458
Polly Rico Bellows Free Academy St. Albans, VT 05478	Patricia Bettinger Bellows Free Academy St. Albans, VT 05478
Kevin Coen Springfield High School Springfield, VT 05156	Deborah Matthews Orange Windsor Supervisory Union South Royalton, VT 05068
Jessica Shurlow Rutland High School Rutland, VT 05701	
Tracey Truncale Keene High School Keene, NH 03431	

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Committee on Public Secondary Schools

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY

Principals of member schools must report to the Committee within sixty (60) days of occurrence any substantive change in the school which has a *negative impact* on the school's ability to meet any of the Committee's Standards for Accreditation. The report of a substantive change must describe the change itself as well as detail the impact on the school's ability to meet the Standards. The following are potential areas where there might be negative substantive changes which must be reported:

- elimination of fine arts, practical arts and student activities

- diminished upkeep and maintenance of facilities

- significantly decreased funding

- cuts in the level of administrative and supervisory staffing

- cuts in the number of teachers and/or guidance counselors

- grade level responsibilities of the principal

- cuts in the number of support staff

- decreases in student services

- cuts in the educational media staffing

- increases in student enrollment that cannot be accommodated

- takeover by the state

- inordinate user fees

- changes in the student population that warrant program or staffing modification(s) that cannot be accommodated, e.g., the number of special needs students or vocational students or students with limited English proficiency